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THE SEPARATE CONSTITUTION AND COMMUNION OF THE
ASSOCIATE CHURCH VINDICATED.

PART I.

On the Organization of the Catholic Visible Church.

MR. EDITOR—

IN your number for November last, a query is proposed over the signature of a "Constant Reader," concerning the divisions unhappily prevailing in the Christian church in the United States. It affords me no small degree of pleasure to see the subject of union and secession proposed for discussion in the Religious Monitor. A proper discussion of this subject, might, in your correspondent's estimation, add new interest to your highly edifying pages; and comport well with the design of a work "devoted to the principles of the Reformation." My present aim, rather than to offer any direct solution of my own, is to concur in the invitation given to a formal investigation—by suggesting a few things concerning the state of the question—and mentioning some points of difficulty to be solved. Yet the famous saying of a timid undertaker, in a cause of infinitely less moment, presents itself to my mind: "Any person of all who are qualified rather than me, myself rather than nobody."

As to the query proposed, in general, I would remark:

1. I agree with the following assumptions: 1st. "That the present aspect of the visible church, divided into almost innumerable sects, shows that there must be blame somewhere." Because such an aspect and state of the church is contrary to Song vi. 9. "My dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother." And to 1. Cor. i. 10. "And now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divis-

ions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." 2. "That it would be an appropriate, and, by the blessing of God, a profitable exercise, for each denomination, impartially, as in the sight of God, and by the rule of his word, to inquire if they can be justifiable in maintaining a separate [constitution] and communion from all the other denominations of professed Christians; or if there is no one of the many divisions with which they could conscientiously unite;" conscience itself being examined anew by the rule of God's word. Isa. xlv. 20. "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Rom. xvi. 17. "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Hag. i. 7 "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways."

2. If this enquiry were made by the rule and in the manner recommended, most denominations must find cause to condemn themselves, in standing separate from one or more of the present denominations of their brethren. They would consequently find cause to alter or reform those peculiarities of their constitution or practice, which induce them, of choice, to stand separate, or which compel their brethren to exclude them. One party is in the wrong in every dispute, and sometimes both are. Exod. ii. 13. "Behold two men of the Hebrews strove together, and he said to him that did the wrong, why smitest thou thy fellow?" James iv. 1. "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?"

3. The inquiry above recommended must be understood to be concerning the lawfulness of one denomination uniting with another *as such*. For the purest denomination on earth can have no hesitancy in joining with the most corrupt; provided the latter consent to correct by suitable concession and reformation the evils complained of by the former. Jer. xv. 19. "And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth. Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them."

4. There is a possibility of some one existing denomination making the inquiry by the rule and in the manner proposed, and yet finding it utterly inconsistent with that rule—the word of God—to unite with any other existing denomination *as such*. John xvi. 32. "Behold the hour is coming, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own home, and shall leave me alone." And Jer. xv. 19. "Return not thou unto them." "As general statements," to use the querists own words, "are of little use unless particularly applied," permit me to ask, Is *not* the Associate Church in North America justifiable in maintaining a separate constitution and communion from

the other denominations in the United States *as such*; or while these denominations retain their present constitutions and pursue their present practices? If the duty of answering and assigning reasons devolved on me, I would, in order to induce discussion, answer in the affirmative, leaving it to those who pleased to impugn and raise objections. And the following would be my method of proof and illustration: If a union of the Associate Church, with any other of the existing denominations be lawful, it must be granted that it would be with some one of the following, viz: the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Reformed Synod, the Associate Reformed, the Dissenting Reformed, or the Dutch Reformed. I would then begin with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and would connect, for reasons to be assigned, the question concerning separation from it, with that concerning separation from the Established Presbyterian church in Scotland, where the Secession originated.

The question being put concerning separation from each of the above named branches of the visible church, must in every instance naturally resolve into two. 1. Had the original ministers and members of the Associate Church any true scriptural grounds of separation from the Established Church of Scotland? 2. Have the grounds of separation been *all* removed by any reformation, *since that period in the Church of Scotland*, so that *no one* scriptural ground of separation now remains? But to prepare the way for a more accurate, intelligible and easy solution of these queries, it is necessary to premise a few remarks: 1. Concerning the constitution or organization of the Catholic visible church. And 2. Concerning the secession of a *minority* from the *majority* of any branch of the visible church. An extensive field, you will at once see, is here opened for scriptural argumentation; but not more extensive than what must necessarily be traversed in attempting to give a fair reply to the broad query of the "Constant Reader." I would both desire and hope to see this field occupied by some abler disputant in defence of the secession cause, who might devise for himself perhaps a more lucid and concise method than the one now proposed. May these words sink deep into the ears of all who handle the pen of the writer, "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." And these into the heart of him that writes, and of him that reads the present essay—"For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth *the* (Gr.) truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." John iii. 20, 21.

In case some more expert hand should offer an easier solution of the query concerning the union of churches, I shall be happily anticipated; or rather my efforts will be superseded; and I shall have the pleasure of reading and learning something from others on this subject for my own edification. In the mean time as nothing can be lost by investigation of principles, take, if you please, the following concerning the organization of the Catholic visible church.

Definitions. 1. The *invisible* church of Christ comprehends the whole company of elect beloved human beings, purchased by his blood, and who have been, or shall be called by his word and Spirit, justified by his righteousness, and adopted into his family, sanctified by his grace, and made inheritors of eternal life. Eph. v. 25—27. Heb. xii. 23.

2. The *visible Catholic Church* comprehends all who in every age profess the true religion, with their children. Acts vii. 38. Compare Deut. xxix. 10—13. 1. Cor. xii. 28. Compare Mat. xix. 14.

3. The *visible* church is called Catholic or *universal*, to distinguish it from any one particular section of it, which also takes the name of church, whether distinguished by local situation, or by some peculiarity of profession and worship. Rev. i. 11. 2. Thess. ii. 4.

4. The *organization* or *constitution* of the visible Catholic Church, or of any particular branch of the same, is her *visible order and composition of parts*, by which she is formed into a visible body of members, distinct from all other associations of men upon earth. Eph. ii. 19—22. But in Scripture the constituting of the church is called her *building*. (Mat. xvi. 18.) The *ordaining* or *placing* and *setting* (Gr.) of her, (John xv. 16. 1. Cor. xii. 28.) the *setting up* a *kingdom*, (Dan. ii. 44.) the *appointing* or *covenanting* (Gr.) of a *kingdom*, that is, the appointing of one by covenant. Luke xxii. 29. The term *constitution* is used in a two-fold sense to denote either the act of ordering and composing many parts into one church, or the *plan* after which any section of the Catholic Church is modelled.

5. The *act of ordering and composing* the church may, when precision of language is requisite, be called the *act or deed of constituting*. It will be seen to be, when a church is rightly constituted, the act of Christ alone, done with the suffrage and consent of his professed members.

6. The *plan* after which any church is *modelled*, may be called her *form of constitution*. This, when a church is rightly constituted, is also from Christ, alone, as her Sovereign King and Head.

7. Some use the term *constitution* in a third sense, to denote

the *system of words*, describing the plan, after which a church is modelled. This is the same thing with a creed or confession.

These definitions we request the reader to keep closely in view, in examining the following particulars, which are offered in direct illustration of the subject proposed.

1. Christ as Mediator of the covenant of grace, is the church's sole *Constitutor*. By him alone she is built, placed, established by covenant, set, and set up, as a kingdom. "I," says the Mediator, "will build my church." I have ordained (or placed) you. I appoint or covenant to you a kingdom. The God of Heaven will set up a kingdom. This is the honour conferred, by the Father, on "the man whose name is the *BRANCH*." Zech. vi. 12. 13. "He shall build—even HE shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory." This glory of building the church, especially of devising for her a plan of organization, and of erecting her into a visible church-state is a divine prerogative involving the highest act of regal power, and is competent to none, but him whose name is the *BRANCH*, and who sits a priest upon his throne by virtue of the counsel of peace between them both.

2. The *form* of the church's constitution is substantially contained in the ten commandments with the preface prefixed. By these was the church in the wilderness, of which Stephen speaks, formally and solemnly constituted. Ex. xix. 5. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice, indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Compare Deut. ix. 11. "The Lord gave me two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant." But for a more clear explanation, it may be remarked, 1st. The form of the church, as it is stated in the two tables, is moral and immutable, admitting of no change till the end of the world, not even by the Law-giver himself. Deut. v. 22. "He added no more." Mat. v. 17. "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." 2. This *moral* and *perpetual* form admits of *positive* precepts being annexed as a supplement, only by the same Divine Legislator. All such positive precepts, while continuing unrepealed, are of equal authority with the original ten, and equally compose part of the church's covenant and form of constitution. Ex. xxiv. 3. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said—All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. v. 4. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. v. 7. "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people." The judgments here spoken of are evidently the judicial precepts with some of the

ceremonial kind interspersed, which are contained in the three chapters immediately preceding. *By the words of the Lord*, may here be intended the ten commandments, called the *ten words*. Deut. x. 4. (*Margin.*) Precepts of the positive kind under the new dispensation, are comparatively few, such as baptism and the Lord's supper. But I have received of the Lord, says the Apostle, as his only reason for delivering to the church a new institution. 1. Cor. xi. 23. And any thing received from Christ the King and Head, and by an inspired Apostle, delivered in Scripture, is to be considered as a sacred *tradition*, or trust, committed to the church, and is to be scrupulously guarded by her as one term or item of her divine constitution. 2. Thess. ii. 15. 3. Precepts of the positive kind do in their own nature admit of being repealed by the same authority which enacted them; and thus the form of constitution takes both the appearance and the name of being new. Heb. vii. 18. "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before." And viii. 8. "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah." 4. This form of constitution, comprehending the whole, both of its moral and positive precepts, is to be found fully delineated in the Scriptures, of the Old and New Testaments. and in them alone. It continues, of course, unalterably fixed in all its parts, from the completion of the sacred canon till the end. Zion's King we have seen to be her only rightful Constitutor. His word is the only canon or rule by which this city must be measured. (Rev. xxi. 15.) He has spoken his mind in the Scriptures, and ceased in silence till his second glorious appearance. (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) Who then dare put forth his hand to move or shake aught in that "kingdom which cannot be shaken." (Heb. xii. 28.) Who can with impunity be guilty of meddling with the very structure of Christ's visible body? of presuming to arrogate to themselves the highest and most essential exercise of the royal prerogative? In the last place: The church's form of constitution is made up of *promises* and *precepts*, both which, in their subject matter, contain nothing but *doctrine*,—the truth of divine inspiration. By *obeying* from the heart that form of *doctrine* which had been delivered unto them, the Romans ceased to be the servants of sin. (Rom. vi. 17.) The promise with which the law is prefaced, is a summary of the doctrine of divine revelation. "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." It teaches us that God, speaking in the person of the Son, is Jehovah, and our God and Redeemer, and that therefore we are bound, by reason of what he is in himself, and of what he has wrought for us, to keep all his command.

ments. Is it not with respect to the true doctrine, by the belief and profession of which the church is constituted, that she is said to be built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone? (Eph. ii. 20.) And by the teaching of the true doctrine, the chief corner stone is laid in Zion. "God shall lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone." Isa. xxviii. 16. The Father indeed has laid or set him as the foundation from eternity, by election and decree. He has also exhibited him in the gospel as filling this place in every act of his mediatorial function. He exhibited him in a signal manner by his resurrection from the dead, and exaltation to his own right hand. (Ps. cxviii. 22.) But every gospel minister has the honour, as an instrument, of laying this stone *doctrinally* in the dispensation of the word committed to him. "I have laid the foundation," says the Apostle, speaking of his labours in the gospel. (1. Cor. iii. 10.) This instrumentality is exercised by the officers of the church *judicially*, in their determination of doctrinal controversies. And according to the degree in which the doctrine of any church is corrupted, is Christ mislaid and set at naught by the builders. When any church has carried this sin to its full height, by a plain denial of the Divine Person, or the Supreme Headship of the Son of God, they are immediately by him unchurched, as was the case with the Jews. (Mat. xxi. 38—43.) Upon their consummated guilt in killing the heir, he declares, "The kingdom of heaven is taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

3. The system of words, describing the plan of a particular church's constitution, is human, and not only *may*, but *must* vary, according to time, place and other circumstances; while the substance of it being divine, continues unalterably the same. Neh. ix. 38. "Because of all this we make a sure covenant and write it." Here the church with her teachers, of whom Ezra was the principal one, are said to compose and write a system of words, the articles of which are contained in the following chapter. And although the substance of all that they professed and engaged to perform in that instrument, is to be found in Moses and the Prophets, and was deduced from them; yet this composition of parts is no where to be found till formed by public agreement in accommodation to the present necessity, and for the express purpose of "*sealing unto it.*" "We make and write" is the expression, which shows that it was the deed of the multitude, performed no doubt through means of their ordinary organs, and not the work of Ezra alone, or of any individual *as such*. That this transaction considered as a whole, was public solemn covenanting, I cheerfully admit, and yet maintain that the system of words used on that occa-

sion do, in some measure, exhibit to view the plan of the church's organization as then existing in her reformed state. The practice of the church therefore, on this occasion, affords us an example of making creeds and confessions. The composing of a creed is one of the preliminary steps which are necessary to the celebration of the ordinance of public and social vowing. The yielding of our formal assent, or the affixing of our signature to the bond, substantially completes the celebration. And the adding of an oath gives the action all that sanction and solemnity, of which it is susceptible. Our reforming ancestors entitled one of these written instruments—"THE NATIONAL COVENANT OR CONFESSION OF FAITH." A Confession of Faith may indeed be distinct, in its very structure, from the form of an ecclesiastical bond or covenant. The one expresses the truths, which we believe, *doctrinally*, and the duties which, we acknowledge, ought to be practised. The other declares the truths which we *profess* to believe *savingly*, and the duties which we resolve in the strength of divine grace to *perform*. We profess to believe savingly that the Lord is our God, upon no other ground than the promise which he makes of himself in the person of his Son, and through the medium of the gospel. We engage that we will *endeavour* to keep all his commandments.

For further proof of the propriety of composing creeds, let any one compare Rom. vi. 17. and 2. Tim. i. 13. with 2. Pet. i. 12. Let any one compare what the Spirit dictates in the two former texts, concerning a *form of doctrine, and form of sound words*, with the phrase—PRESENT TRUTH, which he uses in the latter. The PRESENT TRUTH—that portion of revealed truth which is presently contested, requires a present form of sound words to express it. This form, if not written, as in the above example, must at least be oral, like the *faithful sayings*, occasionally noticed and inserted in Scripture. The multitude who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, must appear with their Father's name, written on their foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) Their system of sound words, publicly and judicially exhibited, and acted upon, serve both to display the name or truth of Jehovah, and to distinguish them in the most conspicuous manner from the worshippers of the beast. For these are not without pretensions of being the followers of the Lamb and of the Bible. The former, therefore, establish the legality of their claim by concurring in one distinctive and unequivocal mark—by presenting to every beholder the same "frontlet between their eyes," and thus obviating the necessity of an enquiry to whose camp they belong.

PHILOPHOS.

ON TRYING PROVIDENCES.

If the people of God could always understand those dispensations of Providence which are sent on purpose to try them, it might prevent them from taking those imprudent steps which frequently cost them years of sorrow and mortification to retrace: others, it might keep from despondency and "vexing thoughts," which tend to imbitter every comfort, and unfit them for every duty. It might strengthen and establish the wavering in respect to their duty, and enable them to go forward, and cut off occasion from those who seek occasion, against Christ and his people. Let this be my apology for offering a few remarks on such dispensations.

When I say God's people, I would not be understood to mean exclusively the regenerate, but those who are his by profession; because the manner of his providential dealing with both, is frequently the same so far as is visible, though the effects produced are different. By a trying dispensation of Providence, I do not mean exclusively such occurrences as occasion grief, pain or trouble, but all such as have a bearing upon the *real* state and character of the person, to make it appear what it is. The repeated provocations of Israel were trials to the meekness of Moses—Mordecai's not bowing was a trial to Haman's pride, and one which it could not stand. I would here also remark, that it is looking too much or altogether at the external circumstances or second causes that produce the trials, and too little, or none at all to the invisible over-ruling hand of God, that directs and orders all these things, which lead many into a misunderstanding of the dispensation which is sent to try them, and to consider it no trial at all, and consequently to adopt a line of conduct which produces a train of evils. For example, when Shimei came along the hill side cursing and throwing stones as he went, Abishai fell into this mistake; but David looked higher and saw that this was part of his trial, which God had ordered for him, and therefore adopted a very different line of conduct from that proposed to him. When Saul and the people with him were sent to destroy Amalek, they allowed their thoughts to rest upon the goodliness of the sheep and oxen, and by this means saw not the trial that was in it to their obedience, and therefore failed in executing fully their commission. When the messengers came from Babylon to Hezekiah, he looked so much at the honour done to him, that he saw not that God was trying his pride and vanity; and so fell into that sin, and had heavy tidings sent him on account of it. It must therefore be of great importance to the Christian, in forming a right judgment of the dispensations of Providence, and of the course

of conduct to be pursued, to remember at all times that they are ordered by God in every particular of time, place, manner, and co-operation, and the precise bearing which they have upon his mind and affections.

I would farther remark, that very generally the devil sets his snare beside God's trial. We see it in Job's case, also in David's, when he set to numbering the people, and in Peter's when he denied his Lord. And it is laid where it will be least suspected; for who suspects a loving wife of giving a *bad advice*, or who would expect such a man as Joab to give a *good one*. Yet it would seem that both in Job's and David's case, part of their snare was concealed there.

Generally the views and feelings of ungodly men concur in the design of the tempter, and their influence will be excited that way; but in every case the snare has in it a bait to some lust or evil propensity in our hearts, which presently bestirs itself to lay hold on it. And the bait is chosen in most cases to suit the predominating or besetting sin. Jacob appears to have been subtle, and the snare into which he fell, was set for his disposition. Solomon loved strange women, and in them did Satan lay that snare, which succeeded in drawing him from the purity of God's worship, and almost to ruin. Peter was rash and forward, and to that disposition the snare, by which he fell so grievously, was adapted. When, therefore, circumstances appear strongly to invite us to comply with the solicitations of our own propensity; if we are secretly fond of flattery, of gay company and dress, of becoming rich, of sensual pleasure; if we are envious, or resentful, or whatever be our propensity—and opportunity strongly invites, instead of making it a concluding argument in favour of compliance as many do, we may be assured a snare is before us. And instead of giving way to those suggestions that are poured into the mind, or the tumult of the passions excited by them on such an occasion, we ought to make it a rule to pause, deliberate, and pray that we may have our eyes opened, and that our foot may be set on an even place. We may also be assured that God never approves of gratifying the flesh, how favorable soever the circumstances, (ordered in his Providence for trying us) may be for it. Jonah went to Joppa, and found a ship ready to sail, and the wind fair, and he paid his passage and went on board—but was he in the right way? The stronger the allurements are, so much greater is the danger.

"Let no man say that he is tempted of God. He cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." He lays no snare, and holds forth no bait to the commission of sin, or the omission of duty. Every allurements to sin, owes its ensnaring influence to the lust of our own hearts, and

the suggestions of Satan. Had it been Joseph that went up to the house-top, the beauty of Bathsheba would not have had the power to do the mischief which it did. Had Peter been sent to bring Israel out of Egypt, we have reason to believe he would have been often provoked, perhaps to smite with his sword, or to call fire down upon the rebels from heaven. "The prince of this world cometh, (says Christ,) but he hath nothing in me;" and therefore his most subtle temptations, his most violent assaults gained him no advantage over the holy Redeemer; nor would they over angels, or the spirits of just men made perfect. And as the believer's inherent corruptions weaken, and his graces strengthen, the power of temptation diminishes, and those snares which did once succeed with him, will not catch him now. The menaces of the council, and even their beating, only sends Peter away rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer such things for Christ's sake; whereas a short time ago, the hundredth part of this overpowered his courage in the hall of the High Priest. It is therefore manifest that lust gives to temptation its power. Would you have lighter trials and fewer temptations, crucify your flesh with its affections and lusts, and your wish shall infallibly be granted.

I would now invite the tried Christian to consider God's design in trying his people. Sin, formally considered, is no part of it; nor does he have any agency in bringing it to pass, as such. The assertion of the Apostle James above mentioned absolutely frees him from being the author of sin. Sin is in many cases an infallibly certain consequence of those trials which he orders; and in some of these cases he designs it as the chastisement or punishment of some previous sin or course of sinning.

Ahab was tried on the question whether he should go up to Ramath Gilead or not. And the trial in this was, whether he would follow the suggestions of the lying Spirit in the mouth of his prophets, or Micaiah, the Lord's prophet. He yielded to the former and went and was slain. This trial was of God, as the prophet shows. Much sin was committed, but it terminated in the execution of the judgment, which Elijah had before denounced. And it was only *in so far* as what they did and said contributed towards this *judgment*, that it was God's doing. And in this aspect it could not possibly be sin, because it was justice. The same observations will apply to David's numbering the people. Sometimes the sin committed is allowed to take place, and is intended as a stroke of judicial hardening, by which he punishes the reprobate, and chastises his own; and sometimes it lies in his design, as a just disclosure of hypocrisy—when tribulation and

persecution arise for the sake of the cross. This has often been a sore trial to the church, and many could not stand it, but turning their back to Christ and his words, fell away to the side of the world. This in them was a grievous sin, but it served to show that their receiving the word with joy, and for awhile believing, was only an hypocritical pretence, by which they imposed on others, and perhaps deceived themselves also. And this is often the result of many trials of far less severity. His design is to prove, and try his own children as men try silver. He puts them into the furnace, and melts them down, and causes them to part with their dross, their legality, pride, ambition, worldly mindedness, and inordinate love of the creature. While this process is going on, his Spirit discovers to them their own vileness, and opens up the hidden and deep veins of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of their hearts, which, till now, they would hardly have believed to be there. Upon such a trial Job exclaims, "Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee?" Job. xl. 4. And David cries out as if he saw in himself nothing but corruption, and was on the point of passing away as altogether dross. Ps. xxxviii. At another time of sore trial, he discovers Atheism in his heart, and that he was no better in the view of God than a beast. Ps. lxxiii. At another time of sore trial he sees himself to be obnoxious to wrath, and that if God were to mark iniquity, he could not stand. Ps. cxxx. And in particular, the unbelief or rebellious obstinacy of the heart, is at such times laid open, so that the best saint is made to see that nothing but Almighty Grace can sanctify it, and heartily to desire that all the glory of salvation should be God's. It is in the time of trial, the Lord, the Healer, probes the sore to the bottom, which causes exquisite suffering, and unbelief cries out, "his arrows (not the lancet) stick fast in me—his wrath has gone forth against me; his hand presses me sore"—(not to press out bad matter, but to crush me.) Ps. xxxviii. Yet it is only to bring about a sound cure. When he tears, it is that he may heal; when he smites, it is that he may bind up. Hos. vi. 1.

Another thing he designs in trying his own, is to discover the excellent nature of that faith, and those graces which are wrought in them by his Spirit. It is, saith Peter, "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." This heavenly principle has stood every trial to which it has yet been subjected. (See Heb. xi.) To this Paul adds the suffrage of his experience, when he says—"troubled on every

side, but not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed." Again, " As dying, and behold we live ; as chastened, but not killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." This ought to bear up the mind of the Christian in his sorest trouble, that it is designed to make him both *see* and *feel* that faith is an immortal principle ; and that the just *shall live* though he were in the fire, or in the water, and *out-live* all his trials, and Death, the last one—by Faith. While all earthly and sensual principles pass off with the dross and perish forever, and every human stay and prop, on which the soul would lean, gives way in the fire, *faith continues*. It may be enveloped in the flame, and smoke so as to be neither seen nor heard, for a time ; but it will yet appear in all its stateliness, without the smallest injury, amidst the ashes of the wood, hay and stubble.

Another thing which he designs is, to *increase* both their graces and their comforts. How delightful is that return which the soul has to its "quiet rest," after coming up from the "sorrows of death and the pains of Hell." Ps. cxvi. And what a flow of gratitude and love, and what spiritual vigour, in setting forward in the course of duty. One cannot but infer that the height of heavenly affection, to which he now soars, bears a full proportion to the depth of his former trouble. The three children came forth from Nebuchadnezzar's furnace with a brighter lustre on their faith in God, than when they were cast in. And it must be so. For if the trial destroys the flesh with its affections, unbelief, pride, worldly-mindedness, &c. the strengthening of the Spirit and its graces is a necessary consequence. The lifting of the soul from earthly things, is the raising of it to things heavenly—is to give it a more heavenly frame and conversation—to bring it nearer to God, and make it more like him. By this means the saint is brought to have a contempt for the world, and an abhorrence of sin, and to delight in the word and promise of God, as the well-spring of all his comfort. And particularly, sore affliction is often the means of drawing the soul into a firm and close alliance with the *present truth, the word of Christ's patience*. Let the world call it bigotry, sectarianism, or what they please ; he who has found the truth in the furnace of soul-dissolving trouble, and embraced it there, will not be easily persuaded to cast it away as dross. It will then form an acquaintance with it, which is not to be sacrificed at the shrine of popularity. He will sing while he lives :

" The words of God are words most pure,
They be like silver tried ;

In earthen furnace seven times,
That hath been purified.

"They more than gold, yea much fine gold,
To be desired are,
Than honey, honey from the comb,
That droppeth, sweeter far."

Farther: he designs by subjecting his people to severe trials, to give them a *nearer view of himself* than he does at other times. He makes bare the arm of his power in supporting and delivering them oftentimes as discernibly as if they were cast into a burning fiery furnace, or shut up in a Lion's den. He chooses this time to shed abroad his everlasting love in their hearts, and to make them so sensible of being his children, as to break forth in songs of joy, in the dungeon and at the stake. If one will but listen to the Psalmist, coming out of trial, he will hardly fail to hear him tell, that God *heard his prayers*. And many more than he, have to tell this. Now, to be assured that our prayer has passed through, and that it hath brought back a gracious return, is enough to make a man happy in any situation. This is the time in which he discloses his faithfulness and his bowels of compassion. Never did Abraham, till he was taken to Heaven, see God so clearly as at that trying moment, when he stretched forth his hand, with the knife, to plunge it into the child of promise. Again, in that sore trial of Jacob's, when Laban had just left him, and Esau with 400 men was expected, what a marvellous discovery did he obtain of God. "There wrestled a man with him till the break of day!" "Did we not cast *three* men into the fire," said the astonished King, "Lo, I see *four* men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is *like the Son of God*." "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear," says one in deep trouble, "but now mine *eye seeth thee*." It was in a time of sore trial that John obtained that wonderful discovery of God which is detailed in the Revelation. And it may not be improper to mention that the Pilgrim's Progress, a book that speaks for itself, was composed while the author suffered a long and cruel imprisonment. Never, perhaps, does he make the face of his servants have so discernible a lustre in preaching, as when some sore and trying dispensation is passing over them. This made Paul say that though he was bound, yet the word of God was not bound.

He designs also by the trials of his people to *prepare* them for the service or the station which he has laid out in his purpose for them. And there is one important service for which it cannot fail to prepare all, more or less, namely to administer comfort to others, who may be in similar trouble. Who so able to touch with tenderness the nice points of a soul's dis-

tress, as one who has himself felt it there? Who can enter so fully into the afflictions of the widows and fatherless, as one who has been bereft?

Peter's trial, it would seem, was to qualify him for helping his brethren—from the words of the Saviour "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." His three times denying, laid him under a three-fold obligation to exert himself to feed Christ's sheep and lambs. And those men are still the most powerful preachers, who have been taught their lessons in deep trouble, and brought to the alternative of either venturing their *eternal all* upon the promise of God, or casting off religion altogether. They speak with an emphasis that would make a Felix tremble. They are men that will hold up their faces for Christ's despised truths, when others turn and flee.

By the trials of his people God designs to set before the world a convincing evidence, that religion is *more than a form, or a set of opinions*. It makes the poor man content and happy, when he knows not how another meal is to be obtained—it tranquilizes the soul when the world is full of tumult, and at its wit's end—it bears up the heart when nothing else in the wide creation could keep it from sinking to despair—it makes the soul rejoice in circumstances which would make the stoutest unrenowned heart to roar with anguish—and makes the believer to salute the most terrific form of death with gladness and singing. To ascribe these effects to a nonentity or to fancy, is a greater absurdity than any that has been supposed to attach itself to religion, by its enemies. There is a reality and a life in it, which will one day convince the wisest of its adversaries that they were desperate fools for rejecting it.

In carrying his people triumphantly through sore trials, God designs to *overpower and confound Satan*. I have already said that his snare accompanies the trial, and when the believer stands the trial, and comes safely through it, the snare has been broken, and he has escaped. And this demonstrates Satan's labour to be fruitless, and his policy to be folly. Often has he attempted by various methods to destroy the church, but has as often failed, for though she is still burning, she is not yet consumed, nor is one belonging to Christ lost.

Once more : by trying dispensations, God sometimes not only cuts short a course of defection, but also *lays the foundation* for a Scriptural revival and a flourishing state of the church. It has this effect also upon the individual—"before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep thy law," which God has graciously connected with a "great reward." Trouble puts the church, when it is sanctified to her, upon "searching and trying her ways, and turning again unto the Lord."

She is sometimes, after all the search she has been able to make, forced to put this petition, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." And when God answers her, then the love of truth and holiness is kindled up into a flame, and those truths and duties which have been buried for generations are now searched out, and set in a conspicuous place. The very dust and rubbish of Zion is now esteemed for her sake.

[To be concluded.]

FOR THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

ON THE CONTROVERSY RELATING TO THE PURCHASE OF THE COMMON BENEFITS OF LIFE.

THE controversy on the subject of the common benefits of life, as being the purchase of Christ, is comparatively recent, and has not, to a great extent, engaged the attention of the church of Christ. It had not been agitated in the days of the Westminster Assembly, nor has it any place in the numerous systems of theology that have appeared in the reformation churches. In the writings of the old divines, such as Owen, Boston, the Erskines and others, when speaking of the purchase of Christ, incidental expressions are to be found, which may be, and have been viewed as favouring one side or the other. It ought, however, to be kept in mind by all, that as this controversy has arisen since their day, it is doing injustice to these illustrious men, as well as to the truth on this argument, to drag in such expressions as their deliberate decision, in a controversy which they never knew. There can be no doubt, had this assumed distinctly the form of a controverted point in their day, as it has done since, they would have fully weighed the matter, and their language respecting it, would have been more guarded and decisive. At any rate, we are sure they never entertained the sentiments which the doctrine "that common benefits are the purchase of Christ," was first brought to support, and which use of it first elicited a controversy on the subject.

As it is not necessary for the church, in her Confession of Faith, or in the exhibition of her principles to particularize every truth, but only those which are denied or opposed: So, as often as errors arise and become conspicuous, and there is danger of the minds of men being distracted, or led away from the truth by their pernicious influence, it becomes her imperative duty to lift up a decided testimony against them. The circumstances which called the attention of the Secession Church to the subject of the common benefits of life, and to express her views respecting it, as she has done, are the following:

"A book was published in the year 1749, entitled *A Treatise on Justifying Faith*, and ascribed to Mr. James Fraser, of Brae; sometime minister of the gospel at Culross. In that book, and chiefly in a long appendix to the fifth chapter of it, the Arminian doctrine of universal redemption is largely set forth; but in somewhat of a new form. A few extracts may serve to give an idea of the sentiments advocated in that work. It is asserted that "Christ became the representative of mankind." p. 70—71. "He became surety for all, God so willing it, and the Mediator consenting to it." p. 221. "Every one who is truly and really called to believe on Jesus Christ crucified, is truly redeemed by Christ." p. 137. "Christ indeed, by his death, purchased remission of sins absolutely for all." p. 176. "Christ did satisfy for human nature, and therefore satisfied for all, and every individual of that species." p. 173 and 269. "How doth grace superabound to righteousness, if justification and life be purchased only to a few elected persons?" p. 204—205. "Christ bought the whole of mankind, overhead in whole sale." p. 257. "Though some of the reprobates were damned actually when Christ died for them, in the fulness of time, by reason of the compact betwixt Father and Son." p. 261. The doctrine of universal redemption, thus strongly stated, is modified in a way never yet understood, nor explained, even by its friends, by asserting that Christ did not satisfy divine justice, in the *same sense*, for the reprobate as for the elect. The following sentences refer to this distinction: "Christ, by one ransom, diversely intended, did satisfy for the sins of all mankind." p. 263. "The objects of his death were stated differently in the covenant of redemption." p. 267. "There is a common redemption yet sufficient in law to be pleaded from, and in case of pleading, to justify: and there is a special efficacious redemption, which brings salvation." p. 266. "Reprobates are the object of a common, not of a special redemption—for *whom* he died, not for *whose sake* he died." p. 187. "The death of Christ, as terminated to the elect, did proceed from love, and special love; the same death as terminated to the reprobate did flow from common love." p. 239. Such the doctrine, and such the distinctions set up respecting it. Our readers may try, if they can understand them. Now, it was in this work, with a view to support and illustrate its doctrines, that the doctrine of common benefits being the purchase of Christ, was first presented in such a way as to attract particular notice and examination. On this subject, in the work referred to, we have the following assertions and reasonings: "All the good and comfort which men enjoy, whether special or common, flow from Christ's blood—They being spared from a

present dropping into hell, their health, the several comforts of this life, which all and every one doth enjoy, proceed from Christ as Mediator: therefore Christ behooved to die for them to purchase these things; seeing they have them from him as Mediator." p. 213. "The reprobates enjoying these favours doth result from Christ's death, as the meritorious cause." p. 214. "The magistrate's power doth flow from Christ as Mediator; he, as Mediator, is the fountain thereof." p. 213. This book was industriously circulated, and the minds of some people began to be infected by its errors, yet no hurt was likely to follow to those, under the inspection of the Associate Synod, till the peculiar doctrine of it was set off, by another publication, in the year 1753."

The doctrine, (technically called "*Brace's scheme*,") which has been exhibited above, was strongly advocated by Mr. James Hall, a minister belonging to the Reformed Presbytery. This led to a warm discussion of the subject, in that body, which issued in a rupture among them. When the question was put, five members, (two ministers and three elders) voted against it. But Mr. Hall and two elders voted for the condemned doctrine, and with the moderator, though the minority assumed the character of the Reformed Presbytery. This Presbytery, which was soon after dissolved, published a judicial deed in vindication of their principles, about the extent of Christ's death, in which the doctrines of the new scheme were substantially maintained; but in a more plausible and imposing manner, and without those unconcealed and offensive expressions, which were nearly an antidote to the poison contained in the former book. The very extensive circulation of this publication, among the people belonging to the Associate Church, and the confusion which it was likely to produce, enhanced by the fact, that Mr. Thomas Mair, one of her ministers, had strongly recommended it, furnished a pressing call to the Synod to take up the matter; and by a clear and explicit declaration of the truth, on this subject, to warn the people of the danger, and to establish their minds in the faith. This was done by their act concerning Arminian errors, passed in April 1754. This act, which was remarkably blessed for checking the threatened evil, consists of seven articles, in which the errors of the whole scheme are condemned, and the truth asserted in opposition to them. All that relates to the subject of the purchase of common benefits, as urged in support of the above scheme, is contained in the close of article sixth, which we here give entire:

"VI. That Christ and the benefits of his purchase cannot be divided; neither can these benefits be divided *one* from *another*. Wherefore we are made partakers of the redemp-

tion purchased by Christ, or of the benefits procured by his death; *only* through the effectual application thereof to us by his HOLY SPIRIT, working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling. And whoever do actually receive and enjoy *any* benefits of his purchase, as they do it only in the way of enjoying himself; so they will all be brought forward, in due time, to the full enjoying of himself, and *all* his benefits forever. And whatever things are actively received, or used *any* otherwise than by *faith*, in a state of union with Christ, are *not to be reckoned* among the benefits purchased at his death." [See for the above statements Gib's Display, vol. 2. p. 131—140.]

This was the first judicial expression of her sentiments given by the Associate Church, with reference to the common benefits of life being the purchase of Christ, in opposition to the erroneous doctrines in the pamphlet already referred to. But though the majority of the Reformed Presbytery condemned the Arminian doctrines of universal redemption, published in the new scheme, and supported by a number that separated from them, they did not condemn, but, on the contrary, asserted the statements respecting the purchase of the common benefits of life. From this time forward, therefore, this became a dividing point between the Associate and the Reformed churches. None of the other churches having taken any part in this discussion, nor expressed any opinions on the subject, it is a point in which they only are directly and properly the parties. After the decision of the Associate Synod, however, the question was but little agitated in the country where it began, and has become almost forgotten. So much so, that in the new publication of their testimony, in 1801, so little opposition was made to the truth, on this head, that they deemed it unnecessary to make a particular statement of it in that instrument.

In the United States of America, however, this controversy has been much more warmly contested. Though no mention whatever is made of the doctrine in any standards, except those of the Associate and Reformed churches, yet, of late, a very considerable interest has been taken in this dispute by members of the Associate Reformed Church, in which they are generally found advocating the sentiments of the Reformed Synod. It is not difficult to account for this, at least in part. Most of our readers know that the Associate Reformed Church was originally formed, as its name still indicates, by a union between the Associate and Reformed churches, which was completed in 1782. Some in each of the uniting bodies, however, not agreeing to the union, the result of this measure was, that henceforward, there were three denominations in-

stead of the two which existed before. The points of division which were to be removed by this union, were the same which now divide the Associate and Reformed churches, and as neither of the parties professed to give up with their former views, these in the articles on which the union was based were either suppressed, or expressed in so vague a manner as to be acceptable to both. Notwithstanding, however, it is alleged, and perhaps not without reason, after all the caution exercised, that much was conceded by the Associate Church to the other in that union. These concessions in favour of the principles of the Reformed Church, are distinctly claimed in the testimony of that body, when in page 117, we have the following remark : " These articles of union contain *many valuable concessions* to the Reformed Presbytery, and, considered in connexion with the present state of affairs in the U. States, approached the reformation testimony." This, then, will account to a very considerable extent for the prevalence of these sentiments in the Associate Reformed Church.

It is to be observed, that the *original* statements on this subject, and which were condemned by the act of the Associate Synod above referred to, were, that Christ, by his death, purchased the common benefits of life for *all men*, for the *wicked* and *reprobate*, as well as for the righteous. This is abundantly evident from the quotations already furnished in this article, and from the testimony of the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland, it appears that in this unrestricted sense, was it approved and advocated by that church at that time. The following is the statement from the testimony, on that subject : " The preaching of the gospel indefinitely to mankind, sinners, and *all the common favours of life, indifferently, do all result as native, necessary, and determined consequences from the interposition of Christ, in behalf of his spiritual seed, and have their ultimate foundation in the infinite sufficiency, fulness and perfection of the blood, and sacrifice of Christ God-Man.*"

Now, though in the above extract the doctrine of a particular redemption is taught, it is also very particularly stated that the common benefits of life, as possessed by the wicked, are the fruit of Christ's purchase, result natively and necessarily from it, and the bestowment of them has its foundation in its infinite sufficiency. They were purchased, a ransom was paid for them, otherwise they could not have been enjoyed. This is the aspect in which the doctrine was first presented. In this shape was it produced as an argument in support of a kind of universal redemption, and certainly, if admitted, would not be inconclusive in favour of that doctrine. For our own part, we cannot see how it is possible to admit the one, and, consistently, deny the other. In this aspect

was it regarded by the Associate Synod as a sentiment uncountenanced in Scripture, fraught with danger, and therefore was by them explicitly condemned. In doing so, however, the doctrine taught by them, plainly and avowedly included, that common benefits, that is, the things of this life, as they are enjoyed *in common* by believers and unbelievers, or considered as *separated from* those spiritual blessings, with which they are always accompanied, to the former—are not to be viewed as the purchase of Christ, even to them. This doctrine the Associate Church, both in Britain and America still maintains.

The state of the question, on the part of those opposed to the Associate Church, is now, however, partially changed. The sentiment brought forward in the above scheme, that common benefits are the purchase of Christ to all, reprobate as well as elect, if ever it was, is not now maintained by the Reformed Church in this country, as it appears to have been by their brethren in Scotland, for they expressly condemn the tenet "that Christ purchased any benefit for the reprobate." (Ref. Principles Exhibited, p. 32.) The sentiment now maintained is only "that Christ purchased temporal benefits for believers." A doctrine certainly far less dangerous in itself, and in its consequences, especially if taken in connexion with an explicit avowal of the doctrine of a definite and limited atonement, than in the form in which it was originally promulgated; and we think it may be justly questioned whether, had it never appeared in any other form than that in which it is now proposed, it would ever have been thought of as a subject of serious controversy. And, indeed, we doubt much whether it ever would have been proposed in this form, had it not previously been asserted in the other. Since, however, no matter how, different and apparently contrary statements are made on this subject, in the professed principles of different branches of the visible church, it becomes the duty of all to "*prove* this as well as all other things, and to *hold fast* that which is good."

The views of the Associate Church, on the question in its present form, with some arguments in support of these, will conclude what I have to say on this subject.

[To be concluded.]

Selections.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

THE CONDITION OF THE AGED.

EXPECTATIONS of long life are natural to men. Though many of our companions may have fallen, and some of them

who seemed to bid much fairer for longevity than we did, yet these premonitions have not crushed our hopes. We are still disposed to imagine, that long life shall be our attainment, and are therefore much more busied about what we apprehend is necessary for making our residence here a comfortable one, than about our departure. But on supposition that we had the best assurance of being satisfied with length of days, there does not appear to be much that is inviting about the age of three score and ten, or four score years; at best, the strength of old men is only *labour and sorrow*.

It may be of some advantage to the young, especially as a means of exciting to the diligent improvement of the days of their youth, to present them with the following thoughts upon the condition of the aged.

There are a great multitude of bodily infirmities which are the inseparable attendants of old age. The eye in that stage of life can see nothing clearly; the ear is dull of hearing, every joint is stiff, and every muscle is in some measure ossified. None of the organs of the body can perform their destined functions with that gracefulness and ease which formerly characterized them. The whole system is like a building that is going fast into decay. It has stood for ages, but the foundation is now gone, the walls are full of chinks and rents, and moved so far from the level, that the least violence would lay it in a state of ruin. And this is the case, not only with those aged persons who are labouring under some regular formed distemper, but of those also who complain of no particular malady, and in whom only the decays of nature can be seen. In this debilitated state, the aged person becomes a burden to himself. One part of the body can hardly prop up and support the other. The neck is so feeble, it cannot sustain the head; hence the chin of aged persons usually rests upon the bosom, and the knees and limbs are so weak, they totter beneath the rest of the frame. In that day the keepers of the house tremble, the strong men bow themselves, the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out at the windows are darkened. Eccl. xii. 3.

The minds of many, too, in an advanced state of life, are exceedingly feeble. We cannot explain the connection between soul and body, or show how these substances act upon each other; but this is a fact, that they have a reciprocal influence, is well known, and it is not more discernible in any condition of life than old age. When the body is paralyzed, the mind is rendered weak and feeble; and as in old age every part of the frame is in a paralysed state, so all the powers of the mind lose their liveliness and vigour; the affections become in a greater measure callous, the memory loses its power

of retention, the imagination its force, and the judgment its penetration and discernment. As if the soul were nothing but sublimated matter, the active powers of the mind seem as if they had evaporated with the decays of nature upon the body. Hence the minds of many in old age are no better than those of mere children; and many of those who were the literary ornaments of the age in which they lived, towards the close of a long life, have been in a state of the completest dotage. How affecting to see one who has filled an important public station with honour, and whose mind was fitted to explore the regions of the most abstruse science, sitting in old age like animated matter. But as the soul, while it is in an embodied state, carries on its operations through the organs of the body, when these instruments become unserviceable, though the faculties of the soul are the same as formerly, their operations cannot be rendered so conspicuous to others.

While the aged person is capable of reflecting upon his condition, to him there are many things besides the decays of nature which must be peculiarly affecting. The want of the companions of his youth is a loss which cannot be compensated for by all those attentions which children and other relations may be inclined to show. In that world where he has sojourned during the long period of threescore and ten or fourscore years, he is quite a stranger. His acquaintance are removed into darkness. Perhaps the wife of his bosom has long since been mouldering in the dust. His brothers and sisters are likewise departed this life. Of his companions at school, he has not the recollection of an individual who is alive. The generation to which he belonged has disappeared, and the world is peopled with a new race, of whom he knows almost nothing, and with whom he cannot form any particular intimacies. The men and manners of the place are changed. He cannot enter into their views, he does not understand the theories which they have adopted, and he cannot prosecute their measures. In midst of multitudes he is solitary and without a companion, while all those that were wont to enliven the circle of social life are gone, and gone too without the hope of seeing them in the land of the living any more.

His condition is rendered still more afflictive by the incapacity of relishing many of those things with which he was formerly gratified. This thought is beautifully illustrated in the speech of Barzillai to David, 2 Sam. xix. 34. 37. "And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem! I am this day fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women? Where-

fore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother." At the age of fourscore, desire in a great measure fails. Hence Barzillai solicits for none of those honours or emoluments which might have been expected at the court of David. He was pleased with the thought of having been serviceable to his king, that David and his friends had found an asylum in his house, while many of his subjects were in arms against him. But he wished for no reward. He was contented to live in retirement, and to spend the evening of his days remote from those scenes which were better fitted for the young and the gay than for him. Mirth and music can have no charms to the aged. Even a crown itself, with all the insignia of state, must be objects of no consideration with the man who is putting on the garments of mortality, and lying down in the grave. His last earthly wish is generally that of being buried in the sepulchre of his fathers.

What has been stated above, accords in some measure with the condition of every aged person; but in this class of society there are many things which difference the condition of one aged person from another, and render the case of one far more afflictive than that of another. Poverty is not peculiar to old age, but the effects of poverty are never more sensibly felt than by persons in the decline of life. The young and the vigorous have the hope of bettering their circumstances; but of this hope the aged poor are destitute. Among those indigent persons that travel from door to door, there is perhaps a greater proportion of the aged than of others. And when the infirmities of the body increase upon them to that degree which renders them unable to gather their scanty pittance in this way, how pitiable must the condition of these aged poor be! There are others whose condition is still more painful. They are stung with the recollection of the follies and vices of their young days. They are caused to possess the iniquities of youth in old age; and instead of having any hope that matters will be better with them beyond death, they are full of the most fearful forebodings of future and eternal woe. There are others whose condition is even more to be pitied. They have lived carelessly and at ease, and the same indifference of spirit prevails with them when old age has overtaken them. Die they must; and as they are now in a state of extreme old age, that event cannot be far off. How awful the consideration, that eternity is before them, and that the hoary head, not being found in the way of righteousness, will find no sanctuary there!

We are not, however, to imagine that every aged person is

unhappy. There are certainly not a few who, in the decline of life, enjoy what is far more than a counterbalance to the infirmities of age, the loss of acquaintance, and other evils connected with an advanced state of life. The godly man, who, in midst of all the storms and tribulations of former times, in patience possessed his own soul, does not lose either his reason or his religion in old age. The patience of some of the saints has never been more remarkable than when their bodies were bowed down to the dust under a burden of infirmities. That peevishness and irritability of temper which formerly had been the sin that most easily beset them, utterly forsook them in old age. The brow was adorned with a smile, the law of kindness dwelt upon their tongue; every one took pleasure in doing them service, because every office of kindness was thankfully received. As the body ripened for the grave, so the temper was mellowed for heaven. In them, too, there was not merely a restraint upon those turbulent passions which agitate and distress the human bosom; their faith and hope was strong and vigorous, and their joy was unspeakable and full of glory. The last days of many of the saints have been by far their best days. As the outward man declined, the inward man was renewed and invigorated. As their desire for earthly things failed, their affections took the firmer hold of those which are spiritual and eternal; and as their companions and friends forsook them, their covenant God and Father took them up, and supplied the want of earthly relations, by giving more sensible intimations of his love and presence with them. Happy is that people whose God is the Lord! He will never leave them; he will never forsake them; even to hoar hairs he will befriend them.

MINUTES

Of the Associate Synod of North America, at their Meeting at Philadelphia, May 28, 1828, and continued by adjournment, being their twenty-seventh Annual Meeting.

PHILADELPHIA, May 28, 1828.

The Associate Synod of North America met according to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Thomas Beveridge, Moderator.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Of the Presbytery of Cambridge,

Messrs. Alexander Bullions, Andrew Stark, James Martin, James Irvine, Peter Campbell and Thomas Goodwillie, Ministers; and James Cummings, ——— McNab, and Chauncey Webster, ruling elders.

Of the Presbytery of Philadelphia,

Messrs. Francis Pringle, Thomas Beveridge, William Easton, and Archibald Whyte, jr. Ministers; and John M'Allister and Samuel Hawthorn, ruling elders.

Of the Presbytery of the Carolinas,
Mr. Andrew Heron, Minister.

Of the Presbytery of Miami,
Messrs. James Adams and David Carson, Ministers; and Joseph Kyle, ruling elder.

Of the Presbytery of Muskingum,
Messrs. Thomas Hanna and Joseph Clokey, Ministers.

Of the Presbytery of Ohio,
None.

Of the Presbytery of Chartiers,
James Ramsay, D. D., Minister.

Of the Presbytery of Allegheny,
None.

James P. Miller, being reported as having been ordained by the Presbytery of Muskingum, was invited to a seat.

An excuse was offered for the absence of Dr. Bruce which was not sustained: Also from Mr. Abraham Anderson, which was sustained.

Inquiry being made as to the observance of the Synodical fast, it was found that it had been generally observed by the members present.

The Synod appointed the following committees, viz—

Of supplies, Messrs. Pringle, Irvine, Hanna, Heron, Adams and Dr. Ramsay.

On the funds, Messrs. M'Allister and Webster.

To prepare the draught of an act for a fast, Dr. Ramsay and Mr. Stark.

To examine the records of Presbyteries, as follows, viz:

Messrs. Adams and Hanna, to examine the records of the Presbytery of Cambridge—Messrs. Irvine and Heron those of Philadelphia—Messrs. Pringle and Goodwillie those of the Carolinas—Messrs. Easton and Carson those of Chartiers—Messrs. Martin and McNab those of Allegheny—Messrs. Campbell and Webster those of Ohio—Messrs. Clokey and Hawthorn those of Miami, and Messrs. Whyte and Miller those of Muskingum.

Messrs. Pringle and Heron were appointed a committee of arrangements.

On motion, *Resolved*, That the Synod adopt the following as a standing rule, viz: That no Presbyterian reports be received after the forenoon of the Friday immediately after the Synod's meeting.

Adjourned to meet to morrow morning at 9 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

Thursday, May 29th.

Synod met and was opened with prayer; the Moderator having preached last evening from Heb. iv. 14. (last clause) "let us hold fast our profession."

Members present as above.

The Rev. Francis Pringle was chosen Moderator.

The committee of arrangements reported in part and their report was accepted.

Messrs. Hanna and Webster were appointed a committee to

transcribe the minutes of Synod in order to prepare them for publication in the *Religious Monitor*. Four hundred copies were ordered to be published in pamphlet form, and 200 extra copies of the number of the Monitor containing the minutes.

Papers being called for, reports were given in and read, from the Presbyteries of Muskingum, Carolinas, Ohio and Philadelphia, as follows:

REPORT,

Of the Presbytery of Muskingum.

We have every reason to acknowledge with gratitude the unmerited goodness of the Great Head of the Church toward us, since our organization into a separate Presbytery. Our congregations in general, both settled and vacant, are increasing in numbers, and are not without some evidences of their possessing the power of godliness. Whilst we cannot but see and lament the fearful progress of those worldly maxims and latitudinarian principles, which are desolating so many of the fairest portions of God's heritage, and threatening to consign to oblivion the distinguishing features of our covenanted reformation, we are the more convinced that a faithful testimony for truth, through the blessing of Christ, places the most effectual barrier in the way of those God-dishonouring and soul-ruining principles which are so fashionable in the present day. Unanimity and firmness in adhering to such a testimony is loudly demanded by the existing aspect of things in the visible church.

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Synod in affording our vacant congregations such a liberal portion of supply during the past year, which has all been received, with the exception of Mr. Smart. Our vacancies are refreshed, and some of them are anxiously waiting for, and endeavouring to obtain a stated dispensation of gospel ordinances. According to the order of Synod, Mr. J. P. Miller was taken on trials for ordination; these being performed to the entire satisfaction of Presbytery, he was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, on the 6th of September last. Mr. Joseph Clokey having accepted the call from the united congregations of Mount Pleasant, M'Mahan's Creek and Belmont, and having performed with the cordial approbation of Presbytery, the probationary exercises assigned him, was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and admitted to the pastoral inspection of the aforesaid congregations, on the 18th of September last. Thus we have had the satisfaction of seeing our numbers increase, and another portion of the church furnished with a stated dispensation of divine ordinances. A unanimous call from the united congregations of Londonderry and Sharon for the Rev. Andrew Isaac has been sustained by Presbytery. We are anxious to have this call presented for acceptance, and therefore request this Synod to appoint Mr. Isaac in our bounds as early as possible. We solicit a portion of the supply which may be at the disposal of Synod. Respectfully submitted.

TAOMAS HANNA, *Presbytery Clerk.*

REPORT,

Of the Presbytery of the Carolinas.

The state of religion in those societies, settled and vacant, which fall under our inspection, has undergone, during the last synodical year, no remarkable change. We have still much reason to lament, that ignorance, error, unbelief, and atheism with all their train of practical evils, prevail among the inhabitants of the land wherein we live, and we are constrained to acknowledge, that through the abounding of iniquity, the love of many professors of the name of Christ is waxen cold: nevertheless, we not only assure ourselves that there is among us a remnant according to the election of grace, but we entertain the hope that vital piety is on the increase. The duties of public and private devotion seem to be observed with growing attention, and though the ways of truth are evil spoken of, and some fall away from laudable attainments, death invades our ranks, and the tide of population continues to roll to the west, our numbers are more than kept up.

We have endeavoured to supply the vacancies within our bounds; but after all we have done, or have been able to do, they have no doubt suffered. Messrs. Smart and Kendall came to our assistance, according to your appointment. Messrs. Whyte, Miller and M'Naughton have not appeared; and, though we presume they will be able to exculpate themselves before your tribunal, we

heartily wish that Synod could devise some plan of securing in future the liberal fulfilment of her appointments. It is matter of unfeigned lamentation that while calls for the bread of life are loud and increasing, our ability to answer them is on the decrease. Almost four years ago, Mr. Mushat, through infirmity, desisted from the exercise of the ministry. Ever since we have waited for his restoration to health of body and usefulness in the church, but in vain. Mr. Dixon, on whom for a number of years fell the care of all the churches in this section, has been gradually sinking under the infirmities of age. And latterly, feeling the pressure peculiarly weighty, he tendered to us at the present meeting a resignation of his whole charge. This was painful to him and to us, but it was the demand of dire necessity, and submission was the only alternative. The tender was accepted, and his congregation added to the list of our vacancies. We therefore beg not only a continuance of our former quota of supplies, but an increase proportionate to our increased demand. We have room in our vacancies for the constant labours of at least two missionaries.

JOHN WALLACE, *Moderator*,
WM. M. MELWEE, *Clerk, pro. tem.*

Little River Meeting House, Fairfield District, }
South Carolina, March 26, 1828. }

REPORT, *Of the Presbytery of Ohio.*

We have to report the prosperous situation of our congregations, settled and vacant. By the timely assistance of Messrs. Ferrier, Isaacs and Kendall, our vacant congregations have been watered with the word of life; and the members have been encouraged by the prospect of a continued supply of divine ordinances.

On the 19th of September, Mr. Isaac Beggs was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and installed as pastor in the united congregations of Mercer, Rocky Spring and Springfield.

On the 20th of September, Mr. Matthew Snodgrass was ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and installed pastor of the united congregations of Cherry-run and Connant.

By these two settlements our hands have been strengthened; one Presbytery enlarged, and a number of congregations placed under a fixed ministry.

The attention of some of our congregations has been for some time directed to the duty of public and solemn covenanting. In the congregations of Mr. Seroggs, upwards of 130 members solemnly joined in that work, some time in October last.

Notwithstanding the settlements which we have obtained, our vacant congregations will require as much supply as can be granted by Synod.

Two students Messrs. Dowthet and Rodgers have been under our care. They have frequently delivered discourses before Presbytery; and so far as they have been under our observation, are entitled to the recommendation of Presbytery.

D. GOODWILLE, *Moderator*,
ALEXANDER MURRAY, *Clerk*.

May 13, 1828.

REPORT *Of the Presbytery of Philadelphia.*

It is with grateful feelings that the presbytery report to Synod some important events which have occurred in their bounds since last meeting of Synod—events which they trust will long have a beneficial influence on that portion of the church under their immediate care. The Presbytery refer to the settlement of Messrs. William Easton, and Archibald Whyte, jun. The former was ordained pastor to the Associate congregations of Octarara, Oxford and Muddy Run, on the 7th of June last; the latter as pastor to the Associate congregation of Baltimore, on the 5th of December. The circumstances connected with the settlement at Baltimore seem entitled to particular notice. Our friends there were only organized as a congregation in April, 1826, and in less than two years after, through the Lord's blessing, in their liberal spirit and zealous exertions, they have obtained the stated dispensation of gospel ordinances.

It is with pleasure that the presbytery have also to report, that a call for Mr. Finlay McNaughton, from the United congregations of Mercersburgh and

McConnellsburgh, was sustained last February, and having been forwarded to the presbytery of Cambridge, with a request that, Mr. McNaughton being in their bounds, they should present it to him; and having been presented, it has been accepted. Mr. Clarkson's resignation of the charge of said congregations, on account of continued ill health, after some delay, was accepted last December. We lament the necessity our brother was under of taking such a step, at the same time it is comfortable to think that the want hereby occasioned is in a fair way of being so speedily supplied. It affords the presbytery sincere satisfaction to be able to add, that through the good hand of his God upon him, Mr. Beveridge has been enabled to labour in the congregation of Philadelphia, discharging all the parts of the ministerial office; so that in conformity to the continued earnest expectation of both congregation and presbytery, the way is prepared for his accepting the call from said congregation, the acceptance of which was declined, till it should appear upon trial, whether such a situation would consist with his health, and consequent ability for official duty. And as the presbytery has received advice that a call from Argyle for Mr. Beveridge has been sustained by the presbytery of Cambridge, it is earnestly desired, in case the competition comes to be judged of by Synod, that they decide in favour of Philadelphia, a station of special importance. Thus, the Lord, in his great goodness, is pleased to favour our desire to have the waste places of our Zion, in some measure comfortably supplied. We may be allowed, however, to express our regret, that a considerable portion of the supply allotted us by Synod for the benefit of our vacancies, have not been enjoyed. What would have been equal to six months supply by one preacher, and even more has been lost to our vacancies; owing, no doubt, to various causes, but occasioning grievous disappointment to some of our vacancies. The Presbytery thinks it not improper to specify one of these causes, for the purpose of turning the attention of Synod to some remedy in similar cases. Mr. Clokey's not fulfilling his appointment, is understood to be owing to his having accepted a call in another Presbytery. It is submitted, whether Synod might not resolve that a preacher should fulfil his appointment, notwithstanding his accepting a call, or make it the duty of the Presbytery, in whose bounds he is to be settled, to make good the appointment. The interests of vacant congregations should not be left in such a precarious state, if it can be prevented.

Mr. Joseph Banks, student, though from circumstances, he finds it difficult to command much time for study, has delivered some discourses before Presbytery, since last meeting. Mr. James Wallace, during the vacation last year, also delivered a discourse.

The Presbytery indulge the hope that Synod will proceed, at this meeting, to re-establish the Eastern Theological Seminary, according to their desire expressed in the report of 1826. And the circumstances of the vacancies under their care, call for as large a portion of supply as Synod can afford.

F. PRINGLE, *Presbytery Clerk.*

Philadelphia, May 29, 1828.

Synod then resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Anderson in the chair. On the rising of the committee, the following papers were reported as transmitted, viz: A communication from James Miller late of Putnam, containing a request for a review of his case—a letter from Dr. Bruce relative to the Associate Synod in Scotland—a communication from the Associate Session of Mercer in Ohio Presbytery containing a reference either for advice or decision. After the Synod had resumed their business the report of Mr. Alexander Roseburg treasurer at Pittsburgh was read, and transmitted to the committee on the funds. A communication was read from a committee of the Synod of Original Seceders in Scotland, in reply to a letter from our committee.

The committee on the Declaration and Testimony were called upon for their report, according to the decision of last year. It was stated the report was not in sufficient readiness, and a request

of the committee to be indulged with the privilege of deferring their report till to-morrow morning was granted.

On motion, *Resolved*, That the committee of correspondence with the Synod in Scotland deposit in the hands of the clerk a copy of the friendly letter forwarded last year.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above; read the minutes of last sitting. The report of the Presbytery of Chartiers was read as follows.

REPORT.

Of the Presbytery of Chartiers.

The Presbytery have to report that the state of the congregations under their care is much the same as formerly. Mr. John Kendall was licensed to preach the gospel on the last Tuesday of August. Last fall they examined for the divinity Hall of the West, and admitted into that Seminary, Alexander M'Gill.

They beg leave to state to Synod, as their opinion, that one Theological Seminary is sufficient for our church. They think it would probably be better for our young men, who have a view to the ministry, to get their theological education in one place; by associating together at the same hall, they have a happy opportunity of forming habits of intimacy and friendship, that would have the most desirable consequences. It would tend to greater unity of sentiment among them, and they would be more benefitted by society, than if they were members of two different schools. The expense to the Synod would be less, and to the young men, on the whole, would not be greater. The funds of the two Halls might be united, and the two libraries be formed into one.

This, without any views of selfishness or pretending to give any preference to our western teacher, above the present one, or any other who might be appointed in the east, they humbly suggest to the Synod, wishing them to take the matter into their serious consideration. They also suggest to Synod whether, in the event of having but one Hall, a teacher of Ecclesiastical History and Biblical Literature, might not be profitably associated with the teacher of Theology.

The Presbytery farther submit to the consideration of Synod, whether the forming themselves into sub-Synods might not be beneficial.

(Signed)

ALEXANDER DONNAN, *Pres'by. Clerk, pro. tem.*

The committee appointed to prepare an answer to the letter of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod reported the draught of an answer which on motion was ordered to lie on the table for consideration.

Mr. Millers communication was taken up, and on motion it was resolved, that a committee be appointed to report thereon.—Messrs. Adams and Bullions were appointed said committee.

The petition and reference from the Session of Mercer congregation was on motion referred to a select committee. Messrs. Carson and Hanna were appointed.

The letter from the committee of the Synod of Original Seceders was taken into consideration, and after some conversation on the subject, it was on motion, *resolved*, that the Testimony of the Synod of Original Seceders be read, in order that the Synod may be enabled to form a judgment in the case. Made the order of the day for to-morrow afternoon. Agreed that to-morrow forenoon be devoted to prayer and praise and religious conference, and Messrs. Bullions and Carson were appointed to conduct the service.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Closed with prayer.

Friday, May 30th.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above, together with Mr. William Morris, ruling elder from Baltimore. Read the minutes of last sitting. The principal part of this sederunt was employed in the exercise of praise and prayer, and extra-judicial conference—after which the reports of the Presbyteries of Cambridge and Miami, were given in and read as follows:

REPORT,

Of the Presbytery of Cambridge.

We have to record with much sorrow the death of our beloved brother, James Whyte. This mournful event took place on the 15th December last, which bereaved his family of an affectionate head, and the church of a faithful and zealous advocate for the secession cause.

At our meeting in September last, the session of the congregation of Albany referred to the consideration and decision of Presbytery, the following question: Has a man, who has been wilfully deserted by his wife, a right to be married to another woman, without previously having obtained a divorce? After some discussion of the subject, Presbytery agreed to refer the same *simpliciter* to the Synod. The congregation of Argyle having made out a call for Mr. Thomas Beveridge, and the same being sustained by the Presbytery, is herewith transmitted to the Synod, in order that it may be presented to him. A call from the congregation of Putnam has been accepted, by Mr. Alexander Gordon. A new congregation has been organized at York, in the western part of the state; and another at Johnstown, near Florida. Mr. Peter Gordon, who had studied divinity two years, under the care of the United Associate Synod of Scotland, was received by the Presbytery in September last; since which time he has been pursuing his studies under our care. Mr. William Pringle, a licentiate from the same Synod, upon application for admission into our church as a preacher, was received by the Presbytery. Against this deed Mr. Campbell protested, and appealed to the Synod. Mr. Alexander Mitchell, from the same Synod, has also been admitted as a preacher by the Presbytery. Mr. John Ashton, an elder of the congregation of Cambridge, having petitioned Presbytery to be disannexed from that congregation, and annexed to the congregation of Salem, the prayer of the petitioner was granted. Against this decision Mr. Alexander Bullions protested, and appealed to the Synod. A resolution being offered that the Presbytery resolve itself into a Bible Society, for distributing Bibles with the Psalms in metre and no others, it was agreed to refer the same to the consideration of Synod. The following are the students now under the care of Presbytery, Horace Thompson, James Wallace, David Gordon and Peter Gordon. James McGeoch, formerly under our care, is now prosecuting his studies under Professor Paxton in Scotland. Mr. Thompson having completed the usual course of study is recommended to the Synod to be taken on trial for license. The Presbytery request the Synod to allow them as liberal a portion of supply for their numerous and interesting vacancies as possible.

Some time ago Presbytery agreed to raise a fund for missionary purposes, and the following sums have been raised:

Hebron \$16 5; Argyle 27 5; Salem 5 15; Cambridge 43 82; Florida 12; Barnett 15 93; Ryegate 11 18; New-York 52 62; Albany 12 50; Bovina 11 50. Total \$207 80.

Of the above there has been paid to Mr. Irvine for a mission to Lower

Canada	\$11 50
To Mr. Ferrier for services in Upper Canada,	19
To Mr. Isaac for service in do	9

Balance in hand, 168 30

ANDREW STARK, Moderator.

REPORT,

Of the Presbytery of Miami.

We have not been visited with any changes in the state of congregations worthy of particular notice since the last meeting of Synod. The appointments of supplies, so generously allotted us by Synod, have been fulfilled with a commen-

dable punctuality on the part of persons appointed. Our vacancies have been refreshed, but still labour under the privation of a stated dispensation of ordinances; and owing to various causes, which it would be difficult here to explain, none of them are at present cheered with the prospect of an immediate settlement. New petitions have been received for supplies, and for want of means have been but very partially granted. One of these is from a people in Washington county, Va. who had formerly been in connexion with the Associate Church, but had all, who survive, with the exception of a very few, joined the Associate Reformed after the Union, not being aware that an Associate Church was left in existence in America.

We have to state that Mr. James P. Miller having, for reasons which he deemed sufficient, declined the prosecution of his journey to the south, continued, at the earnest solicitation of a member of Presbytery, and of one of our vacancies, to supply amongst us a few Sabbaths longer than his appointment, and to assist in the dispensation of the supper in Xenia. Mr. Hindman not having been taken on trials, and our vacancies being disappointed in their expectations of his labours, this seasonable aid received of Mr. Miller, was to our Presbytery the more valuable.

A case or two of public scandal, which originated some few years ago in the congregation of Carmel, having come a second time under the consideration of Presbytery, and being of so intricate a nature as to cause great difficulty in settling them, and embodying such a variety of particulars, as to deter us from troubling Synod with a reference of the case, it has been agreed to petition Synod for the aid of some experienced members to assist us in deciding them at our next meeting in October.

A resolution passed at last meeting of Synod, renders it proper for us again to advert to the subject of slave holding. The Presbytery are ready to acknowledge a share in the common guilt of neglecting a steady and persevering enforcement of the Synod's resolutions of 1811. Perhaps this has, in ourselves and others, arisen from false notions of prudence; while the evil has diminished little, if any, during the seventeen years which have elapsed since the adoption of the resolutions. Still we are steadily aiming to prevent any greater extension of the evil, by endeavouring to bring our members to the solemn profession that they have no right, in the sight of God, to hold their negroes in involuntary and perpetual slavery, and to the promise neither to sell nor bequeath them as transferable property. We ask for the assistance of Synod in this, and therefore recommend a rigorous examination of the Presbyteries and Sessions, whether they tolerate any of their ministers or members in buying negroes, without previously pledging themselves to the Presbytery or Session, as the case may be, that they will act according to the spirit of the resolutions, particularly that they will "give unto" them "that which is just and equal," in paying them wages when their services merit them; and influenced by no consideration of temporal advantage, or loss, or even suffering, will not alienate or transfer any as perpetual slaves, either by sale or legacy. Again we ask the re-publication of the resolutions on slave holding, in the Minutes.

D. CARSON, *Moderator.*

The committee on the Testimony reported in part, pledging themselves to report more fully before the Synod adjourns.

On motion, *Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to enquire and report what sums of money have been received by the Synod's treasurer, arising from the sale of the several publications printed by order and at the expense of Synod, exclusive of their minutes; particularly the book of Discipline, Declaration and Testimony, (last edition) and the Warning against Unitarian and Hopkinsian errors. The enquiry to embrace the appropriations made for these publications respectively, the sums received for each, together with the number of copies, if any, remaining unsold, and where deposited. The report to be made if practicable, at the present session. Messrs. Hanna and Clokey were appointed the committee.

Resolved, also, That the copies of the Warning against Unitarian and Hopkinsian errors, remaining unsold, be divided among the several Presbyteries for the purpose of being distrib-

uted in the congregations under their inspection, or to others, either by sale, or gratis, as they shall find most practicable. Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

Intimation was given that Mr. Thomas Wilson of York county Penn. has by his will left a legacy of \$500 to the funds of the Associate Synod of North America to be paid out of the proceeds of property yet unsold: Mr. Pringle was authorised to receive the money from the executors, receipt for it and pay it over to the treasurer.

Proceeded to the order of the day, viz. The reading of the Testimony of the original Seceders, after having made some progress, on motion, the Synod agreed to defer the reading of the remainder for the present, in order to prepare the way for the other necessary business.

The committee on the Declaration and Testimony gave in an addition to their former report. Proceeded to the consideration of the report. An erasure being, by the committee, proposed in the latter part of the 7th chapter of the Narrative, it was moved that the report of the committee relating to the erasure, page 40 of the Narrative, be recommitted to the committee, with instructions to prepare in its room, a brief account of the history of the Associate church of Scotland down to the present day. This was agreed to, and Messrs. Adams and Beveridge were added to the committee, with orders to report as soon as practicable.

Before proceeding to consider the rest of the report, Synod adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Closed with prayer.

Saturday, May 31st.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting. Mr. Hanna was, at his own request, discharged from the committee on the reference from Mercer session, and Mr. Martin substituted in his room.

The committee on Mr. James Miller's request reported, and their report was adopted as follows:~

The committee to whom the petition of Mr. Jas. Miller was referred, report. That as there is no evidence before us but Mr. Miller's own assertions; that the statements mentioned in it, said to have been made by Polly Thomson before the civil court, were made, or if made, were false. We would therefore suggest the propriety of adopting the following resolution:

Resolved, That Mr. Jas. Miller be allowed to lay before Synod the evidences of the allegations mentioned in his petition.

A. BULLIONS,
J. ADAMS.

The report of the Treasurer at Philadelphia was read and referred to the committee on the funds.

The report of the brethren sent on the Missouri mission was given in and read, and ordered to be spread on the records and the thanks of Synod were tendered to the Missionaries for their diligence and fidelity. The report is as follows:

To the Rev. Associate Synod of North America—

Pursuant to the appointment of Synod, your missionaries set out on their tour with the expectation of reaching the nearest station by the first Sabbath in October; but the distance being greater than had been supposed, and from the pressing request of a member of the Miami Presbytery, and the peculiar situation of the congregations, they were induced to spend the first and second Sabbaths of October, in two of that Presbyteries vacancies. After considerable deliberation respecting the route by which they could best accomplish the object of their mission, they judged it most expedient to travel together. Accordingly they set out in company from Carmel, the last of the vacancies of the Presbytery of Miami, which lay in their route, on the Monday after the second Sabbath of October.

They first visited Bloomington, a flourishing village and settlement, in Monroe county, Indiana, about 90 miles N. W. from Madison. In this place, and an adjacent neighbourhood, your missionaries spent the third Sabbath of October. Two opportunities of preaching on other days were also embraced and several families were visited. The cordiality, with which the principles of the reformation, as maintained and exhibited in the subordinate standards of the Synod, seemed to be received by a goodly number in this place, was very encouraging to your missionaries, especially in the commencement of their labours. This place had been visited by both the Synod's former missionaries. And from what appears at first to be a very small beginning, your missionaries are of opinion that, by proper attention of Synod, with the Divine blessing, there is in this place a very reasonable prospect, and that at no very distant period, of a stated display of the Secession Testimony, and original principles of the reformation. [See statistical table accompanying the report.]

From Bloomington they proceeded to Terre Haute, on the east side of the Wabash river, near the western limits of the state of Indiana, and about 60 miles from Bloomington. Five miles below Terre Haute, on Clear Creek, on the west side of the Wabash, were found several families that have recently petitioned the Miami Presbytery for preaching. Having spent a day in visiting these, and preached in the evening, your missionaries re-crossed the Wabash and visited a settlement on Racoon Creek, from 12 to 15 miles above, and nearly north of Terre Haute; where they were very kindly received by a few families, that had once enjoyed the dispensation of gospel ordinances, in one of the congregations under the care of the Kentucky, now Miami Presbytery. This was the first visit received by either of these places. From the prospects which seemed to open here, it was judged expedient to continue in this region two Sabbaths. Accordingly one of your missionaries remained on Racoon on the fourth Sabbath of October, and the following week extended his visits to another settlement still higher up Racoon; where he also met with a very encouraging reception, and where he preached the following Sabbath. The other returned to the settlement on the west side of the Wabash, where he spent the fourth Sabbath of October, and thence proceeded down the Wabash about twenty miles, where he preached one evening. The subsequent Sabbath was also spent by the one on Clear Creek, and the other on Racoon. And almost every day of the intervening week was occupied in public teaching and in visiting such individuals and families as solicited it. During the short visit of your missionaries here, a considerable number professed their adherence to the standards of the Associate Synod, for the first time. Others were admitted on certificate. Ordinance of baptism was administered to an adult and several children. It was here judged expedient that your missionaries should avail themselves of the power entrusted to them to constitute themselves into a Presbytery. Accordingly they met, pursuant to previous agreement, at the house of George Malcom, Esq. on Clear Creek, on Monday the fifteenth of November, and after sermon from Nahum i. 15, first clause, "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace," Presbytery was constituted by Mr. Walker, Moderator.

Commissioners praying for a supply of preaching, also for the election and ordination of elders, appeared and were admitted from the following places, viz. Clear Creek, near Terre Haute, on the west side of the Wabash, Lower Racoon and Upper Racoon, both in Park county, Indiana. A verbal petition was also reported from Bloomington, praying for a supply of preaching there, and also for the election and ordination of elders.

The place next intended to be visited was near Springfield, Sangamo county, Illinois; where they had expected to reach by the Sabbath succeeding their

departure from the Wabash. The distance between these places is near 170 miles, by the nearest travelled road. But about this time a very considerable rain fell, and the settlements on the road, which they had to travel, were sometimes a full day's journey apart. There were no bridges nor ferries by which they could cross the waters, in consequence of which they were detained several days on the way, and prevented from reaching the Sangamo settlement, by the time contemplated, and were under the necessity of spending a Sabbath on the way. In two neighbourhoods in Sangamo county, your missionaries spent the fourth Sabbath of November, besides preaching one or two other days. The few families which have professed adherence to the principles of the Associate Synod, and which appeared not a little revived by the visit, were making arrangements to remove from their then residence to Quincy, Adams county, a settlement on the Mississippi river, some distance above the mouth of the Illinois river; where they have petitioned for the next supply of preaching to be sent.

From the Sangamo, it would have been desirable, and had been contemplated by your missionaries to have visited a settlement on Spoon river, on the north west side of Illinois river, where a few families reside, who had, previous to their emigrating to that country, espoused the profession of the doctrines of the reformation, as maintained by the Associate Synod; and who have not yet been visited by any of the Synod's missionaries. But a visit at this time was rendered altogether impracticable by the high waters. A communication, however, has been received by your missionaries, requesting, on behalf of several families, a visit from the Synod's next missionaries. Their location is at or near Canton post office, 14 miles from Lewistown, Fulton county, Illinois.

Having abandoned the idea of attempting a visit to this latter settlement, your missionaries proceeded directly on to Missouri: And on their way visited a settlement on Apple Creek, Carlton, Green county, Illinois, which had been visited by both the Synod's former missionaries. Here they had been expected, and were met with a very cordial welcome. They were, however, unable to spend a Sabbath here. This they regretted the more, as the prospects appeared more encouraging than had been anticipated. A number of families and individuals seemed very earnest in desiring a purer dispensation of gospel ordinances than that which obtained among them, and were very solicitous that the visit should be prolonged at least for a Sabbath. One week day, however, was all that could be spent.

From Apple Creek, your missionaries proceeded on directly to Missouri. They crossed the Mississippi river at Louisiana, where they entered the state of Missouri, about 100 miles above St. Louis. They were now within the bounds of the congregation organised by the Synod's first missionary to that country. The first Sabbath after their arrival in Missouri, was spent by one of your missionaries in Pike county, and by the other in Lincoln county. Having visited the several branches of the congregation in these two counties, a visit was also made to Mount Prairie, Ralls county. A meeting of Presbytery was next held at the house of David Tomb, on the heads of Cuivre, Pike county, at which there was very a general attendance of the people belonging to the congregation, and commissioners had been appointed to represent the different branches. On petition, it was resolved, to establish a place of preaching at Buffaloe, Pike county, another at Mr. Peter Galloway's, (which was named Sharan) in Lincoln county. Application was also made for a place of preaching to be established at Mount Prairie, Ralls county, and for the election and ordination of elders. It is recommended also that Mr. David Tomb's be continued as a place of preaching. Mount Prairie was added as a branch of the congregation, in which branch Aniel Rogers was elected ruling elder. He had been ordained to the office in the congregation in which he had previously resided.

In consequence of some of the members of this congregation possessing slaves, the Presbytery judged it their duty to state very explicitly the principles of the Synod on that subject, and accordingly read the Synod's act of 1811, as inserted in the book of discipline, on that subject. The Presbytery was happy to find so much willingness manifested on the part of the people to comply with the requisitions of that act. All readily acknowledged slavery to be a great evil. Some very cheerfully expressed their determination to free those in their possession, so soon as they arrived at the age of twenty-one: and others so soon as they could do it without incurring the responsibility of their future conduct. From the spirit manifested on this subject, the Presbytery entertain strong hopes, that through means of plain and faithful dealing on the subject

with the divine blessing, the church in that region would soon be freed from the evil altogether, which is not yet very general.

After your missionaries had spent two Sabbaths in the settlements in Missouri, which are situated between the Upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers, besides preaching a number of other days, they proceeded to visit the remaining settlements in Illinois. Accordingly having crossed the Missouri river at St. Charles, they re-crossed the Mississippi at St. Louis; and thence proceeded to Randolph county, Illinois, where their predecessors had bestowed part of their labours. Here they had been anxiously expected. From the number of applications for admission to church membership, it was found necessary to detain at least two Sabbaths in this vicinity, and also to hold a meeting of Presbytery. Accordingly a meeting of Presbytery was called on Friday, the 15th of December, at the house of Archibald Thompson, Esq. at which petitions were received, signed by a considerable number of names, from two different neighbourhoods, praying to be taken under the care of Presbytery, and for places of preaching to be established in their respective vicinities, and also for the election and ordination of elders; all which were granted, except that these and all prior petitions for the election and ordination of elders, with one exception, could not be complied with for want of time. These two places, which are both in Randolph county, Illinois, are situated, the one about 18 miles, the other about 8 miles from Kaskaskia. The former in the statistical table, accompanying this report, is called Unity: the latter Unionville. Here it had been contemplated that your missionaries should separate, the one to take his course to the Carolina Presbytery, and the other to visit the remaining places on the missionary route. But the extraordinary conditions of the roads and waters rendered this impracticable. They therefore proceeded on together towards Indiana, but were repeatedly arrested in their progress by high waters, and were again compelled not only to remain several days, but to spend another Sabbath on the road. They, however, reached Princeton, in Indiana, by the last Sabbath of December, where they were also very kindly received, and a continuation of the labours of the Synod's missionaries was very earnestly solicited by a number of families. By this time the appointment of one of your missionaries had expired. His duty then was to return to his own charge and family. But from the extraordinary state of the roads and waters, no probable calculation could be made, that he could in any reasonable time reach home, if he attempted to perform the journey by land. It was therefore judged most proper for him to take a passage in a steamboat, and ascend the Ohio river, which he accordingly did.

The other whose appointment continued a month longer remained the following Sabbath at Princeton. Of the remaining Sabbaths of this month, one was spent at Fredonia, Crawford county, Indiana, where preaching is also very earnestly desired, and where ordinances had been administered by your former missionaries. Another was spent near Salem, Washington county. Other places to which a visit had been contemplated and desired, were rendered inaccessible by high waters. In consequence of which the last Sabbath of January was spent by this missionary in Clark county, Indiana, one of the vacancies of the Miami Presbytery.

Connected with the account of their own labours, and the prospect of the church in these widely extended, but rapidly peopling regions of the west, your missionaries have given a brief sketch of the route which they pursued. It may in some measure aid, in directing the course of their successors. For from this brief view, your missionaries trust, that the Synod will at once see, that a very extensive and very important field is not only opened and ready for occupancy, but the demand for aid is loud and pressing. In almost every place which they visited, they were not only gratified to find that the principles and doctrines of the reformation, as maintained and exhibited in the subordinate standards of the Associate Synod, were so readily embraced; but that many more than they had anticipated were convinced of the necessity of holding fast these original principles of our holy religion. The faithful labours of their predecessors, with the divine blessing, doubtless contributed, in no small degree, to excite a spirit of enquiry and attention in those places, which they had visited. But the great lengths to which the free communion scheme has been carried, and the facility with which denominations professing the most opposite and contradictory sentiments amalgamate, have not a little aroused a feeling of alarm with those who have any hold of reformation principles. For it is a fact capable of being proved by living witnesses, that many congregations professing to hold the doctrines of the Westminster Assembly, have extended the right hand of fellowship to all

who call themselves by the Christian name, even to Roman Catholics and Arians. Your missionaries further trust, that not only the duty of continuing, but the necessity of increasing the mission to these western states, must also be obvious to Synod. The labours of one or even two missionaries can no longer be viewed as bearing any thing like an adequate proportion to the wants of those who have already espoused the principles of the Associate Synod. They are of the opinion that three at least should be sent as soon as practicable, and continued until the next meeting of Synod. They would also beg leave to suggest the propriety of sending none but ordained ministers, and also of continuing presbyterial powers with the missionaries, who may be sent with proper attention, and a little assistance from the Synod's funds, for a short time, say a year or two, your missionaries are of opinion that two or three, or perhaps more of those places which they have visited, would be able to maintain a stated ministry among them. The Synod will see from the statistical table, accompanying this report, that the people have not only been increasing in their present liberality, but that they had, before your missionaries left them, subscribed nearly three hundred dollars towards defraying the expenses of the next mission, which sum, they have been informed, by communications since received, has, in several instances, been considerably augmented. Your missionaries cannot close this report without most earnestly commending these people to the attention of Synod. The field is extensive. These great rivers, the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Missouri, with their tributaries, the Wabash, the Kaskaskia, the Illinois, &c. drain the waters of perhaps the most extensive continued tracts of very fertile land to be found on our globe, at least our country presents no parallel to it; and doubtless destined at no very distant period to sustain an exceedingly numerous population, now rapidly collecting there, and beyond a certain extent westward; and any thing like a pure exhibition of the gospel of salvation is almost wholly unknown. The desire manifested by many for a more scriptural dispensation of divine ordinances was great and encouraging. Your missionaries had some difficulties to encounter of a more serious kind; yet they were only such as arose from the extraordinary nature of the season, and such as might not occur for an age to come: yet they cannot reflect on their labours in fulfilling their appointment by Synod, without emotion of the deepest gratitude to that kind providence, which conducted them on their way, and whose protecting care they have had so many occasions to acknowledge, and without the feelings of the most affectionate concern for the eternal welfare of a people, from whom they uniformly received every mark of the most attentive hospitality and kindness. The little difficulties which they had to encounter, are not to be named, nor thought of in comparison with the wants of so many immortal souls, and the interest of the visible kingdom of the Great Redeemer.

JOHN WALKER,
JAS. P. MILLER.

A Statement of the time employed in the Western Mission and other places, by Jas. P. Miller.

The subscriber deems it his duty to inform Synod of the manner in which he disposed of his time from the commencement of his appointment on the western mission, until the expiration of the synodical year, especially that part in which he failed in fulfilling the appointments of Synod. A statement of which is here respectfully submitted.

The term for which he was appointed on the mission, embraced seventeen Sabbaths. Three of those, as stated in the report of the mission, were employed in vacancies of the Miami Presbytery, for which he received the usual compensation allowed in those congregations. The remaining fourteen were employed on the appointed missionary field.

The extraordinary state of the roads and waters rendered a journey to the Carolinas at that season, impracticable, at least without the hazard of swimming a number of dangerous streams of water, which is the chief reason that prevented the subscriber from fulfilling his appointment to the Carolinas. Three Sabbaths of this time were spent in Kentucky, where he was necessarily detained by the state of the roads and weather, and where he employed himself in preaching in different places on the Sabbaths, and also on several week days. The remaining time was spent as follows: All March, and the 1st and 2d Sabbaths of April in Miami Presbytery. The 3d Sabbath of April, not being able to reach a vacancy, he spent in one of the settled congregations of the Muskingham Presbytery, the 4th Sabbath, in one of the vacancies of that Presbytery.

The 1st Sabbath of May in a vacancy belonging to Chartiers Presbytery. The other two Sabbaths of May on his way to Synod.

JAS. P. MILLER.

May 31, 1828.

STATISTICAL TABLE ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT OF THE WESTERN MISSION.

Congregations.	Counties.	States.	Families petitioning	Contrib'ns. the present year	Subscript'ns. for next year.
Bloomington	Monroe	Indiana	8	\$2 75	14 00
Clear Creek	Vigo	do	6	7 25	44 50
Lower Racoon	Park	do	8	16 00	44 00
Upper Racoon	do	do	8	7 56	22 00
Lick Ck. Grove (a)	Sangamo	Illinois	6	1 75	20 00
Apple Creek (b)	Green	do	16	7 37	18 00
Mount Prairie	Ralls	Missouri	7	7 50	20 00
Cuivre	Pike	do	3	5 00	6 00
Buffaloe	do	do	3	6 00	9 00
Sharon	Lincoln	do	5	29 00	29 00
Unionville (c)	Randolph	Illinois	15	6 25	16 50
Unity (c)	do	do	5	5 00	29 00
Princeton	Gibson	Indiana	6	8 00	13 00
Fredonia	Crawford	do	3	3 00	20 00
Canton	Fulton	Illinois			
			99	112 43	305 00

(a) These families at this place, or the most of them, calculate to be removed, to Quincy, Adams county, where they have petitioned the next supply to be sent.

(b) Sixteen is the number of petitioners at Apple Creek; not the the number of families, as in other cases.

(c) At each of these places, additions have been made both to the list of petitioners and the subscriptions, for next year; the number nor amount not known.

The Associate Synod of North North America in account with John Walker and James P. Miller.

Dr.

To travelling expenses from setting out on the western mission, until their return to Princeton, Indiana,	\$106 43
To Jas. P. Miller's travelling expenses from Princeton to Clark county, within the bounds of the Miami Presbytery,	11 06
To John Walker's expenses from Princeton until his return home,	28 82
	<u>\$144 32</u>

Cr.

By cash received, on order, on Alexander Roseburgh, treasurer, at Pittsburgh, \$50 each,	\$100 00
By contributions received on the mission,	112 43
	<u>\$212 43</u>
From \$212 43, take \$144 31 Balance in their hands,	\$58 12

On motion, Messrs. Bullions and Campbell, were appointed a committee to converse with the Missionaries relative to their expenses incurred on the mission.

Entered upon the consideration of a draught of a reply to the letter of the Reformed Presbyterian church presented by the committee. After a free conversation on the subject, it was, on motion, *Resolved*, That the draught be recommitted for correc-

tion, and Messrs. Stark and Martin, were added to the committee, with orders to report as soon as practicable.

The report of the board of managers, for the Western Hall not being forwarded, the following statement of the number of students was given in and read.

The following students have attended the Western Theological Seminary during the last session, viz. Samuel Hindman, Nathaniel Ingles, and William Douthet, 4 sessions. James Templeton, John Wallace, Samuel Wilson, James M'Carrel and Nathan Miller, 3 sessions. James Bruce, and James Rodgers, 2 sessions. Alex. Y. M'Gill, and Mr. — Murdock, 1 session.

An extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Cambridge was read relative to a protest, by Mr. Peter Campbell, against a deed of said Presbytery admitting to communion Mr. Wm. Pringle a preacher from the United secession church of Scotland, with an appeal to this Synod: and also a paper of adherence to said protest and appeal, signed by the Rev. Messrs. Alex. Gordon and James Irvine. The reasons of said protest were read together with the Presbyterys answers. Mr. Campbell was heard in support of his protest, and afterwards the Presbytery in reply.

Before the Presbyterys remarks were finished the Synod adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

Resumed the consideration of the business entered upon in the forenoon, and heard the Presbytery of Cambridge in continuation. After the parties were removed, the members expressed their views at length and the question being put, "sustain the appeal or not," it carried "sustain." From this decision Mr. Heron craved his dissent to be marked; in this he was joined by Mr. Bullions with reasons to be given in.

Mr. Hawthorn obtained leave of absence, and Mr. Morris was substituted in his room as a member of the committee, to review the records of the Presbytery of Miami.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock on Monday morning. Closed with prayer.

Monday, June 2d.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above except Mr. Hawthorn absent on leave. Read and corrected the minutes of the former sitting. Mr. Pringle craved and obtained the privilege of joining Messrs. Heron and Bullions in their dissent from the decision of Saturday in the case of Mr. Wm. Pringle.

Reasons of dissent by Messrs. Heron, Bullions and Pringle were given in and read as follows, viz: Because there is no evidence of want of fidelity in the Presbytery of Cambridge, nor can a single article of our standards be specified, to which Mr. Pringle did not express his cordial assent; and, indeed, the decision against which the protest was taken, runs in these words, "upon acceding to the whole of our principles, in all their extent, he was admitted." And in addition to this we cannot recognize the principle which seems to have greatly influenced the

Synod's decision, viz: that the approbation of an act of administration should be required of any as a term of ministerial or christian communion. Signed.

ANDREW HERON.
ALEX'R. BULLIONS.
F. PRINGLE.

The following motion was presented for consideration, viz:

Resolved, That three ministers be appointed to go on a southern and western mission, to embrace in its compass the states of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Alabama, with west Tennessee, all of them to commence their mission as nearly as possible on the 1st of September, and to continue one or more of them till next meeting of Synod.

The resolution was agreed to, and the Rev. Messrs. James P. Miller, and A. Anderson were appointed on the mission; also, Mr. Kendall, and, in order to carry the provisions of the resolution into full effect, the Presbytery of Philadelphia was ordered to take Mr. Kendall on trials for ordination with all convenient expedition. Mr. Anderson to expend at least 4 months on the mission, and Messrs. Miller and Kendall till next meeting of Synod. Said missionaries are authorized to meet in Presbyterial capacity, at such times and places, as they may see fit, and to draw upon the treasurer for the sum of fifty dollars each, to defray their necessary expenses.

The committee on the draught of a letter to be sent to the Reformed Presbyterian Synod reported and their report was adopted and the letter ordered to be transmitted by the committee to the committee of said Synod.

And on motion, *Resolved*, That Messrs. Stark, Beveridge and Martin, be appointed a committee to meet and confer with the committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, or any committee which said Synod may appoint.

The following motion was made and seconded, viz:

Resolved, That two missionaries be appointed to itinerate four months, under the direction of the Presbytery of Cambridge, in Upper Canada. The resolution was agreed to, and Messrs. Heron and Campbell were appointed on said mission for four months, and the Synod agreed to supply Mr. Heron's pulpit, during his absence. The Presbytery of Cambridge pledged themselves to supply Mr. Campbell's pulpit.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

Dr. Ramsey, and Messrs. Carson and Beveridge were appointed a committee to answer reasons of dissent given in the forenoon.

The committee appointed to confer with the missionaries to Missouri, reported, recommending the allowance of twenty dollars to each of the missionaries who have settled charges and seventy five dollars to Mr. Miller for extra expenses. The report was adopted.

Extracts from the minutes of Cambridge Presbytery were read

relative to a protest and appeal by the Rev. A. Bullions from a decision of said Presbytery dissolving the connection between John Ashton a member of the session of Cambridge congregation and said congregation and transferring him to Salem. Reasons of protest with their answers were read and the parties were heard in support and in opposition to the protest. After the parties were removed the members of Synod were heard in detail and the question being put, "sustain the appeal or not" it carried "sustain."

The following question was proposed for consideration, viz: Is it proper and expedient that there should be geographical lines bounding congregations? The question was decided in the affirmative.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Closed with prayer.

Tuesday, June 3d.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting. Entered on the consideration of the competing calls for the Rev. Thomas Beveridge from the congregations of Philadelphia and Argyle. Commissioners were heard in support of the call from Philadelphia and the Presbytery of Cambridge on behalf of the call from Argyle. Before the calls were presented Mr. Beveridge referred the case to the Synod, requesting that Synod should decide: after the remarks of members were heard at length on the subject of the competition the question was put and decided in favour of the call from Philadelphia.

The call from Philadelphia was then presented, but Mr. Beveridge craved liberty, on account of the precarious state of his health to defer acceptance for a time. This request it was not considered expedient to grant and the call being again presented was accepted.

The following students were ordered to be taken on trials for license, viz: Mr. Horace Thompson by the Presbytery of Cambridge. Mr. Joseph Banks by the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Messrs. Samuel Hindman, Nathaniel Ingles and William Douthet by the Presbytery of Chartiers.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

The committees appointed to review the records of the Presbytery of Philadelphia and Miami reported and their reports were accepted. The committees to examine the records of the Presbyteries of Muskingum, the Carolinas, Allegheny, Chartiers and Ohio, reported that the records were not present. The committees were therefore discharged and said Presbyteries are enjoined to be more punctual in future.

The committee on the Declaration and Testimony reported and their report was accepted, and in the view of a new edition of the Declaration and Testimony, the proposed alterations in the history of the Secescion Church were agreed to be appended in foot notes. From this decision Mr. Stark craved his dissent to be marked. The Synod then agreed that a new edition of the Dec-

laration and Testimony be published with all convenient speed, and Messrs. Beveridge, Stark and Martin, were appointed a committee to superintend the publication, with orders to report an estimate of the expense to-morrow morning.

The committee appointed to answer reasons of dissent from the decision of Synod sustaining Mr. Campbells protest, in the case of the admission of Mr. William Pringle, gave in their report, which being corrected, was adopted as follows.

The committee appointed to answer the reasons of dissent against the decision of Synod, sustaining the protest and appeal of Mr. Campbell, from a decision of the Presbytery of Cambridge, admitting Mr. William Pringle into this church, beg leave to report: That by the testimony of the members of the Presbytery themselves, the following facts are attested. 1st. That Mr. Pringle, in applying for admission, first asked it with the privilege of still approving the principles of the United Secession Church, from which he came. 2. That during more or less of two sederunts, Mr. P. in conversation with the Presbytery, opposed our views on some points, particularly on the descending obligation of the covenants of ancestors. 3. That at the 2d sederunt in the very act of giving in his accession, he said—"I approve of your principles, because I consider they are the same with the principles of that church to which I belong," or used words of the same import. 4. That the words "upon acceding to the whole of our principles in all their extent," are the words *not* of Mr. P. in giving his accession, but of a mistake of the clerk in making out a minute of their proceedings, which was afterwards corrected. 5. But what is more strange and striking in our dissenting brethren, affirming "that not a single article of our standards can be specified to which Mr. P. did not express his cordial assent," is this fact so prominent in the very minutes of Presbytery, that Mr. P. declared that his entrance into communion with us, does not imply his approbation of that act of the Associate Synod condemning the late union in Scotland, between the two branches of the Secession Church, known by the names of General Assembly and Associate.

From these facts, then, it appears that it is exceedingly deceptive to argue the cordial assent of Mr. P. to our subordinate standards. Do we not all know that under the words "I approve of your principles, because I consider them the same with the principles of that church to which I belong," the greatest errors may be introduced into the church? The act which our brethren are pleased to call "an act of administration," is a judicial deed of this Synod, declaring that the principles of our subordinate standards are not the same with the principles of the United Associate Church in Scotland, or in other words, that our terms of communion are not the same with theirs. An approbation of the terms in both churches is then manifestly inconsistent, and in some points contradictory. In Mr. Pringle's case, the Presbytery's admitting him, was a virtual setting aside the authority of Synod in that judicial act declaring our terms of communion to be in some points opposed to the principles of that church from which he came.

JAMES RAMSAY,
TH. BEVERIDGE
D. CARSON.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. Closed with prayer.

Wednesday, June 4th.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

The committee appointed to prepare the draught of an act for a fast, reported the following resolution which was adopted, viz: Resolved that the last Thursday of October be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation, that the acknowledgment of sins be read in our churches, and as different causes of fasting and humiliation may exist in different sections of our church it be enjoined upon the several Presbyteries subordinate to this Synod to draw up and press upon the attention of their people such other causes of fasting and humiliation as they may judge to call most loudly for their exercise.

On motion resolved that the next meeting of Synod be appointed at Pittsburgh on the 4th Wednesday of May 1829 and that the Friday following be set apart as a day of fasting and humiliation for renewing the covenant in our Synodical capacity. Mr. Alexander Bullions to preach on the occasion and Mr. Carson in the afternoon, and that the clerk be enjoined to correspond with Dr. Bruce relative to the dispensation of the Lord's Supper on the sabbath immediately succeeding.

Mr. Adams was appointed to preach the sermon at the opening of Synod in case of Mr. Pringles absence.

On motion Resolved, that any minister or preacher coming from another church, and wishing to unite with us, be required by the Presbytery to which he applies to preach before them and undergo an examination.

The publishing committee on the Declaration and Testimony reported and on their report the Synod ordered 3000 copies to be published, and the committee were authorized to draw upon the treasurer for whatever sum may be necessary to defray the expense of publication.

Resolved, also, that agents be appointed in Albany, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh who shall be authorised to dispose of the copies of the Testimony in gross, at 25 cents per copy half bound, and 31 1-4 bound in sheep. In pursuance of this resolution the publishing committee were authorised to appoint agents in Albany, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to receive the work.—One thousand copies to be sent to Philadelphia, 1500 to Pittsburgh and 500 in Albany.

On motion, resolved, that the Presbyteries be enjoined and they are hereby enjoined to adhere strictly to the standing rule of Synod requiring candidates for licensure and ordination to have either engaged in the duty of public covenanting, or express their willingness to engage in that duty the first opportunity.

The committee formerly appointed to report on the question respecting the right of bound children to baptism reported, and the report was ordered to lie on the table.

The subject of the Theological Seminaries was, on motion, made the order of the day for this afternoon.

Resolved, That the Testimony of the Associate Synod of Original Seceders be referred to the several Presbyteries for examination, and that they be instructed to report upon the same at the next meeting of Synod.

Resolved farther, That the Synod request Mr. Stark to procure for them 16 copies of this Testimony.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above. Read the minutes of last sitting.

The report of the committee on the funds was given in and read as follows:

REPORT,

Of the Committee on the Funds.

MISSIONARY FUND.

Balance in the hands of Mr. Steele, \$291 71½

Balance in the hands of Mr. Roseburgh,	86 83
Total Missionary Fund,	\$378 54
Students Fund, remains without alteration, and the interest thereon has been carried to Eastern Theological Hall Fund.	
THEOLOGICAL FUND.	
Balance in the treasury, Eastern Theological Seminary,	\$284 71½
SYNOD'S FUND.	
Balance in the hands of Mr. Roseburgh,	\$63 84
“ “ “ “ Mr. Steele,	271 05½
Paid to Mr. Steele, since making his report,	83 69½
Total Synod's Fund,	\$418 57
JOHN M'ALLISTER, C. WEBSTER.	

Entered on the business made the order of the day for this afternoon, viz: the subject of the Theological seminaries.

The Synod resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Campbell in the chair.

On the rising of the committee the chairman reported the following resolution for consideration, viz:

Resolved, That the Eastern and Western Halls, be united in one, that such a place shall be selected as shall be judged most suitable, and that one or more professors be appointed.

The resolution being under consideration after some remarks were made by members, the Synod adjourned till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. Closed with prayer.

Thursday, June 5th.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer. Members present as above except Mr. Easton, absent with leave. Read the minutes of last sitting.

The committee on the reference from the session of Mercer congregation, in the case of James Breden reported, and their report was adopted as follows:

The committee to whom were referred the papers from the session of the congregation of Mercer, beg leave to report: That there is no evidence before us to show that Joseph and Mary Breden were not censurable. That James Breden's circular contains several injurious reflections. That the persons petitioning the Presbytery of Ohio in relation to the circular, should have done so through the session. That the Presbytery had no sufficient reason for advising the session to refer the case of James Breden to Synod, till they themselves and the session had attempted to settle the matter. The following resolutions are, therefore, respectfully submitted:

1. *Resolved*, That James Breden be permitted to prefer any charge which he may have against any person by way of libel or complaint, before a Session, or Presbytery, or Synod, as the case may be.

2. *Resolved*, That in case he refuse to do so, the session of Mercer be enjoined to deal with him, on the offensive matter and manner of his circular, and proceed according as our books of discipline direct in such cases.

D. CARSON,
J. MARTIN.

Proceeded to the consideration of the business left unfinished last evening, viz. the case of the theological seminary, and

On motion, *Resolved*, That the Synod agree to unite the Eastern and Western Theological Halls. From this decision Mr. Heron entered his dissent.

Resolved also, That a committee consisting of one member from each Presbytery be appointed to report, at the next meeting

of Synod, the most suitable site for the permanent location of this Seminary, and that said committee enquire into the condition of the funds and libraries, &c. of each of the seminaries. Likewise to enquire whether all or what amount of these funds &c. may be transferable to the consolidated Hall. And also the prospects and best means for raising a fund for the support of the Hall.

In pursuance of this resolution the following persons were appointed on the committee, viz. Messrs. W. Wilson, A. Bullions, Heron, Beveridge, Adams, Hanna, Blair, and Murray, and Mr. James P. Miller was added to the committee.

Resolved, also, That each Presbytery be directed to take measures by subscription papers, or otherwise, to ascertain what amount of funds can be raised by voluntary contributions for this purpose, and report also at the next meeting of Synod.

Resolved, further, That in the mean time no new order be taken by Synod respecting the students now engaged in the study of Theology.

Dr. Ramsay, and Messrs. Hanna and Clokey, asked, and obtained leave of absence during the remaining sittings of the Synod.

The request of the Presbytery of Miami for aid in settling some difficult Presbyterian business was granted, and Dr. Ramsay and Mr. Walker were appointed to meet with the Brethren of said Presbytery at Massies Creek, on the 2d Monday of Nov. This decision is considered as superceding the appointed semi-annual meeting of that Presbytery.

The committee of supplies reported, and the scale which being amended, was adopted as follows, viz:

SCALE OF APPOINTMENTS.

- Robert Laing, in the Presbytery of Cambridge till the next meeting of Synod.
 Archibald Whyte, do do do
 Peter Bullions, do except August in the Presbytery of Philadelphia.
 John Mushat, in the Presbytery of Carolinas until next meeting.
 Andrew Isaac, in the Presbytery of Muskingum do
 Thomas Ferrier, Cambridge, June—Ohio, July, and the two first Sabbaths of August—Muskingum, the remainder of August and September—Allegheny, October—Philadelphia, November, December, January and Feb'y.—Cambridge, March, April and May, till next meeting.
 James P. Miller, Cambridge, June, and the two first Sabbaths of July—Chartiers, the remainder of July—two first Sabbaths of August, either in Chartiers or Miami, discretionary with himself. Missouri mission Sept.—and until next meeting.
 John G. Smart, Cambridge, June, July, August, Sept. Oct. and Nov.—Philadelphia, Dec.—and until next meeting.
 John Kendall, Philadelphia, June, July, Aug. Missouri mission Sept. and until next meeting.
 Alexander Mitchell, Cambridge, June, July, August—Ohio, Sept.—Muskingum, October, Miami, Nov. Dec. Jan.—Carolinas, February, and until next meeting.
 Horace Thompson, in the event of license, Cambridge, Sept.—Philadelphia, Oct. and Nov.—Rockbridge congregation Dec.—Carolina Presbytery, Jan. and until next meeting.
 John Hindman, in the event of license, Allegany, July—Ohio, Aug.—Miami, Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.—Carolina, Jan. and until next meeting.
 Samuel Hindman, in the event of license, Ohio, Sept.—Cambridge, October, November, December, January, February.—Ohio, the two first Sabbaths of March.—Chartiers the remainder of March.—Muskingum, April—Allegheny, May, until the next meeting.

Nathaniel Ingles, in the event of license, Muskingum, Sept.—Rockbridge congregation, Oct.

Mr. A. Anderson's congregation Nov. and Dec.—Carolina, January Feb. Miami, March, and until next meeting

William Douthet, in the event of license, Chartiers, two first Sabbaths of October.—Allegany, the remainder of Oct. and Nov. and Dec. Ohio, Dec. Jan. Feb. Muskingum, March—Ohio, April, and until next meeting.

Joseph Banks, in the event of license, Rockbridge congregation, Sept.—Philadelphia, Oct. and two Sabbaths of November—Cambridge, the remainder of Nov. and Dec. Jan. Feb. and March—Philadelphia, April, and until next meeting.

John Wallace, Rockbridge congregation, November.

The Presbytery of Carolina to supply Mr. A. Anderson's congregation, during the months of Sept. and Oct.

The Presbytery of Cambridge to supply Mr. Campbell's congregation, a due proportion of the time which he is absent on the mission to Canada.

The committee on the re-publication of the Testimony were empowered to draw on the Treasurer, if thought by them expedient, for a sum not exceeding \$200 to be paid to the Publisher in advance.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

3 o'clock P. M.

The Synod met and was opened with prayer, members present as above. Heard the minutes of last sitting.

The Synod having at several sittings had under consideration the subject of slavery, and particularly the enforcement of the act passed in 1811, finally came to the following resolution, viz:

"Resolved that a committee be appointed to enquire whether any further measures on the part of Synod be necessary in order to a complete abolition of slavery in our communion, and that if, in their judgment, further measures be found necessary, they prepare an overture on the subject, to be laid before Synod at their next meeting." Messrs. A. Anderson, Adams and Carson were appointed said committee.

The following question was referred by the Presbytery of Cambridge for decision, viz: "Has a man who has been wilfully deserted by his wife a right to be married to another woman, without previously having obtained a bill of divorce."

After a free discussion the question was put "decide at present or not," and carried "decide." The question was then decided in the affirmative, provided the civil law will not grant such divorce. From this decision Messrs. Irvine, Heron, and Campbell entered their dissent. Messrs. Stark and Beveridge craved it to be marked that they did not concur in the above decision, as they considered it premature.

On motion, *Resolved*, That the clerk of the Synod be ordered to correspond with the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, and inform them of the reception of their communication, and the proceedings of this Synod in their case.

On motion, *Resolved*, "That the Presbyteries and Sessions be hereby enjoined to enquire whether any of their members be yet involved in the Mason oath, without having given satisfaction, and that they be dealt with as our Book of Discipline directs."

After reading the minutes from the commencement, prayer, singing the 121st Psalm, and the Apostolical Benediction pronounced by the Moderator, the Synod adjourned to meet in Pittsburgh on the 4th Wednesday of May 1829.

The treasurer's Report and the Statistical Tables are on the two last leaves in this